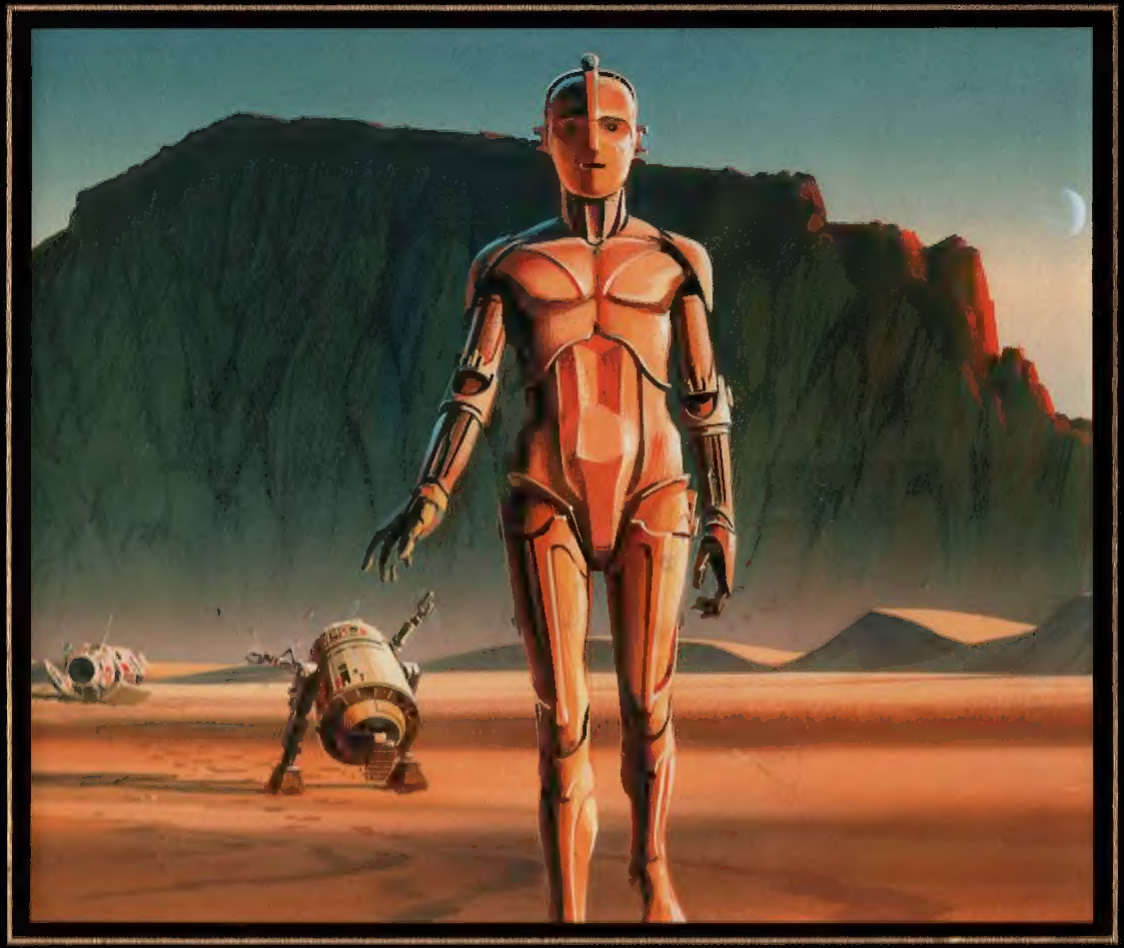


R. McQUARRIE

STAR WARS ART

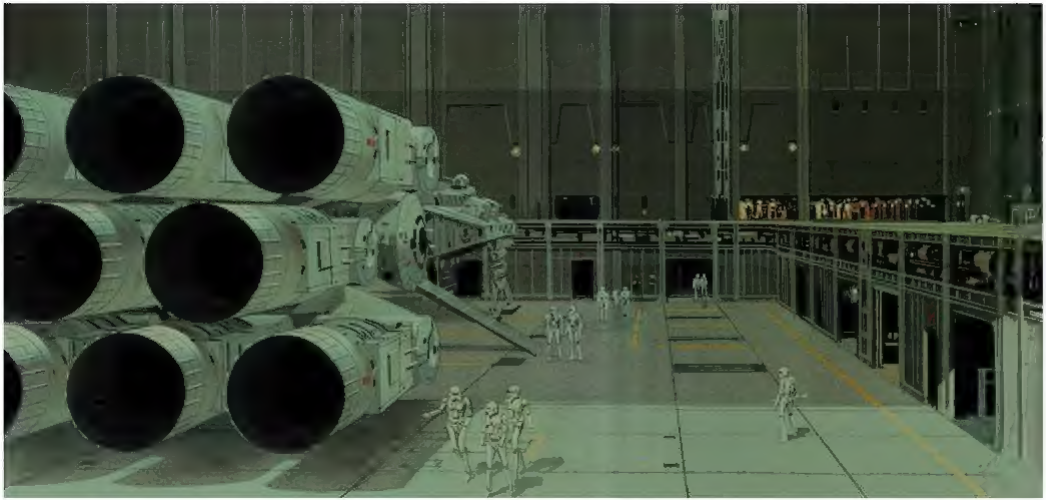
RALPH McQUARRIE

VOLUME I

By Brandon Alinger, Wade Lageose, and David Mandel

Produced in cooperation with the Ralph McQuarrie Archives

ABRAMS, NEW YORK



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FOREWORD

WHEN I FIRST MET RALPH MCQUARRIE and saw a few of his paintings, I knew he was the one. I was visiting my friends Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins, who were developing a sci-fi film, and Ralph had done a few conceptual illustrations for them. Those paintings had a certain look that reminded me of the artworks of Chesley Bonestell and some of the great sci-fi and fantasy illustrators of the 1950s and '60s. There was something else that I liked: Ralph's paintings told in-depth, visually compelling stories in a single, imaginative image—almost like a single frame from a movie that I wanted to see more of. His imaginary lands had histories, and his weirder inventions looked plausible.

At the time I was casting *American Graffiti*, but I was already thinking about a space fantasy film I wanted to do. I told Ralph about it; I doubt he took me seriously (at that time hardly anyone did). But about two years later, I contacted Ralph, during pre-production for the film I'd tentatively titled "The Star Wars." I didn't interview or consider any other artist—though I had hired a concept model maker and I'd later hire a storyboard artist—because I needed Ralph, specifically, to bring to life a few selected moments from my second draft screenplay. I needed him to envision the costumes and the demeanor of Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker, Chewbacca, and C-3PO and R2-D2, among others, to create visuals to help us budget the film—perhaps, above all, I needed someone I could work with, who would take an idea and make it into something workable—and fantastic.

I would start by talking to Ralph about what I wanted in the painting. He would begin sketching and we'd discuss. Then he'd create a rough color study, and we'd discuss; then Ralph would do a complete painted illustration. At first he did just five or six. I liked them.

Ralph was a true artist. He did justice to the story I wanted to tell and its visuals; his paintings enhanced each storytelling moment. Now these paintings are adored by millions; back then we'd throw them in the trunks of our cars and take them to wherever they needed to go, Industrial Light & Magic, 20th Century-Fox, and so on. Ralph's artwork did not sell the film to the studio—that was never their intention—but his first artworks, and those that followed, helped the cast and crew see what I wanted to do, and to share the same ideals; they helped Ben Burtt work out the first sounds for the laser sword, they helped inspire the model makers and Joe Johnston at ILM—and, most importantly, they were a starting point for John Barry, whose production design would be so key to the first film. When Barry came on board the three of us worked closely on the look of the film, designing and discussing each set in detail.

For the first film we got an Oscar™ for Best Art Direction and Ralph's work was a part of that. In fact I liked his paintings so much that we made a portfolio of his artwork.

On *The Empire Strikes Back* Ralph surpassed his first efforts. Not only did he do many more concept illustrations—which Irvin Kershner, Larry Kasdan, and I referred to during the script writing process when brainstorming about Yoda, Dagobah, and so many things that were still conceptual—but he also went over to England, to Elstree Studios, where he continued designing, helping out on the Hoth hangar set and others. He drew storyboards with Kersh. Back at ILM during post-production Ralph executed a number of matte paintings on glass, terrific visionary vistas of Cloud City and the reactor chamber, among others.

I was sorry when he called it quits during pre-production on *Return of the Jedi*, but I understood. He had already produced over a dozen stunning paintings, but he felt tired, burned out. I was glad, however, that he came back to complete the portfolio trilogy, by doing a few more paintings for *Jedi*.

Ralph was a truly creative artist; he was diligent and I could always count on him. He hit his deadlines; he was quick, if necessary, and he was always imaginative.

Since those days, I've been pleased to witness several generations of artists who have taken his artwork and used it as an ongoing wellspring, from Doug Chiang, Iain McCaig, Erik Tiemens, and Ryan Church in the prequel trilogy art department to Dave Filoni and the art departments of *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* and *Star Wars Rebels*—and now on *The Force Awakens*. I feel that his total body of work represents a high-water mark that will continue to inspire artists of all kinds in all disciplines, cinema and otherwise.

For all these reasons I'm happy that Abrams is publishing this masterful, generous book. By diving into the Skywalker Ranch Art Archives once again, not only are they continuing the series I started—*Star Wars Art*—but they're also coming out with what I consider to be the definitive tome on Ralph McQuarrie's Lucasfilm masterworks. I hope you enjoy it.

George Lucas
Skywalker Ranch
May 26, 2015

PREVIOUS SPREAD Detail from production illustration, "Hangar scene Death Star," version 3, November 26, 1975 (see page 122 [2])

In addition to providing preexisting reference imagery, Lucas did some quick sketches of his own to start McQuarrie on ideas. (Photograph by Ed Sumner.)

INTRODUCTION

STAR WARS ART: RALPH MCQUARRIE is a comprehensive study of a single artist's seminal role in the development of what may be the most beloved series of films ever produced. While McQuarrie's artwork has been known to *Star Wars* fans since the beginning, never before has his incredible body of work been assembled in a single publication. Every attempt has been made to make this work all-inclusive. The final artwork count totals a staggering 2,000-plus pieces—a testament to McQuarrie's prolific nature. Extensive research was conducted in the Skywalker Ranch archives, where the vast majority of McQuarrie's originals reside, and with the Lucasfilm Image Archives, where images of yet more artwork were found. Some of these pieces have never before been published. Additional contributions came from private collectors, museums, McQuarrie's colleagues, and the Ralph McQuarrie Archives. A small number of artworks are represented through vintage printed photocopies or photographs (transparencies), when scans of the originals were not available. These pieces are identified in the captions. Organizing such a volume has been no small task, but the results have been fruitful. Beyond simply showing McQuarrie's works—which include production illustrations, concept sketches, costume sketches, matte paintings, marketing artwork, and publishing artwork—thorough research and analysis has been carried out to place them in their proper context.

The artwork is presented in chronological order to the best of the authors' abilities. A portion of McQuarrie's sketches were dated at the time he produced them; other information came via the artist's calendars or supporting production paperwork. Where no date was available, the pieces were anchored to other similar works that can be dated in an effort to show the work in the most likely order that it was created. Presenting the narrative chronologically allows the reader to follow McQuarrie's development of various concepts, as regularly described to him by George Lucas.

For *Star Wars*, McQuarrie documented his loose production schedule in his daily calendar and subsequent notes, allowing the majority of the illustrations to be placed chronologically. On *The Empire Strikes Back*, the artist numbered many of his pieces, allowing a very accurate timeline to be reconstructed, and when he transferred to the London-based live-action production unit, he added an "E" prefix to each sketch number. The *Empire* production illustrations are not numbered, but many can be dated via McQuarrie's calendars. The presentation of these illustrations deviates from strict chronology in several instances in order to group them with the related thumbnail or concept sketches. On *Return of the Jedi*, information is thinner, though a broad timeline can be established through the film's production design bible, which dates a number of the sketches. No specific date information is available on the *Jedi* portfolio paintings. Much of McQuarrie's 1990s publishing work can be placed based on its release date. For *The Illustrated Star Wars Universe*, the paintings were done in the same order they appear in the book.

Assembling the works in chronological order offered new revelations to the authors, as it will for readers. For example, the realization that many of what were previously considered *Star Wars Holiday Special* artworks were actually early concepts for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Very few of McQuarrie's production artworks carry titles in the traditional sense. While the artist carefully described each of his works for the published portfolios that accompanied each film, he did not title them. The McQuarrie titles that do exist are more akin to descriptions and were taken from his calendar notes. These are presented in quotations within the captions to identify them. For the many other pieces that had no McQuarrie title, an interpretive description has been offered based on the authors' best understanding of the works. When working on the *Illustrated Star Wars Universe* project, McQuarrie did title many pieces, and these titles are included wherever possible.

Beyond simply showcasing McQuarrie's brilliant work, this book seeks to provide context and insight into the illustrator's working relationship with George Lucas and other key collaborators, including visual effects art directors Joe Johnston and Nilo Rodis-Jamero, matte painting supervisor Harrison Ellenshaw, and production designers John Barry and Norman Reynolds. Studying McQuarrie's role in each film (and subsequent Lucasfilm projects) was akin to forensic research at times, collaborating recollections with newly uncovered production documents. Some wonderful discoveries were made of never-before-seen McQuarrie pieces and never-before-heard tales of their creation. Key resources included vintage long-form interviews McQuarrie gave, found in the Skywalker Ranch research library, including those done by Lucasfilm's publishing division to create content for the portfolios and *Art of* books for both *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back*, and a long-form interview for the *Bantha Tracks* newsletter conducted during the time of *Return of the Jedi*. This content is exceptional in its clarity, the interviews having been conducted when events were fresh in McQuarrie's mind. Much of it has never been published previously. Additional interview content came from various independent researchers and publications that interviewed McQuarrie in later years.

In some ways, this book is nearly four decades in the making. You hold in your hands the complete chronicle of an illustrator who was absolutely seminal not only to the *Star Wars* films but to all modern blockbusters. McQuarrie stands as one of the great visionaries in the history of motion pictures. His *Star Wars* paintings, drawings, sketches, and matte paintings have never looked better than they do here—more than 1,000 pieces were newly scanned or photographed exclusively for this project. Many others are published here for the very first time. Whether you have been admiring his work for years or are just discovering Ralph McQuarrie, read on and indulge in the prolific output of a modern master.

PLEASE NOTE *When multiple artworks were on a single page, those pages are sometimes restructured in order to accommodate the most artworks possible in these volumes, given space limitations. Also, handwritten annotations have sometimes been moved from their original placement.*

1 George Lucas reviews Ralph McQuarrie's early concept sketches with the artist, circa February 4, 1975. McQuarrie holds a reference image delivered by Lucas, and the second draft script, with "Adventures of the Starkiller" title on its red cover, rests on the drafting table.

Korea
Jun 28

BEFORE THE STAR WARS

"I GOT STARTED BEING AN ARTIST as a little kid," recalled Ralph McQuarrie. "I was interested in drawing. My mother liked to draw, and my grandfather painted things and had a little publication that he did drawings for."

Ralph Angus McQuarrie was born June 13, 1929, in Gary, Indiana, at the beginning of the Great Depression. His parents moved him and his sister to Billings, Montana, to live with his grandparents on their farm. When McQuarrie was ten years old, his family headed to the West Coast when his father sought work there. Later, the family moved to Vancouver, Canada, where McQuarrie would finish high school drawing the entire time. "A lot of it was done to further projects that I was interested in—like model airplanes," he said. In fact, his primary artistic interests were "things that fly and machinery." As McQuarrie explained, "A machine is more pliable in your hands. You can make it look as you wish. Airplanes are probably the most interesting machines, because they fly."

Machines were just a starting point, and his artwork started to gravitate toward the fantastic. "I felt that drawing things as they were was interesting enough, and I mastered it to a fairly good degree," he said. "But I began to realize that I could do more. I could do something that was totally from my imagination, or however I wanted the thing to be, and that grabbed me more than just making things look like they already did."

After graduating high school, McQuarrie took a night illustration course for a year, where he learned enough to obtain a position at the Boeing Aircraft Company in Seattle. Starting around 1949, McQuarrie was the "youngest technical illustrator in the group of about fifty or so illustrators that did repair manuals and parts catalogs," Craig Barton, who later assisted McQuarrie on *The Empire Strikes Back* matte department, recalls. "Ralph used to tell me how it took such a huge amount of discipline to be able to draw all of the windows on the side of the 707, how he had to make these little oval shapes for the windows over and over, and they had to be perfect."

Despite thinking he would receive a deferment for his aerospace work, McQuarrie was drafted for the Korean War in 1950. "I thought I was never gonna get out of there alive," admitted McQuarrie, he was initially drafted as an Army Combat Engineer but later served on the front lines for eleven months as part of the 7th Cavalry Regiment. McQuarrie witnessed vicious ground combat and had several brushes with death. "I came so close so many different times," he said. "I got hit in the side of the head with a round from a Russian burp gun. I felt this tremendous bang, and it spun me for a second. It penetrated my helmet. A guy sat me down and put a bandage on my head. I looked down and found my helmet and put it back on. For all I knew, it had lost its temper, but it had saved my life."

"Ralph was in some of the bloodiest battles of the Korean War, like Pork Chop Hill," says Barton. "He told me a few stories about his experiences. I don't like to think about." It was an experience that affected McQuarrie deeply for the rest of his life: "I heard later that a lot of people came back and said that they were embarrassed to be alive when so many people died that they knew well. That's the way I felt. I was very embarrassed to be around, for some reason."

After being discharged from the army in 1953, McQuarrie returned to Boeing for a time before he decided to enroll at the Art Center School in Los Angeles. Said McQuarrie: "It was when I went to Art Center in 1954 that I started thinking seriously about being an artist." McQuarrie's classmates at Art Center included future fellow conceptualist Syd Mead. "I looked at Syd Mead's stuff," recalled McQuarrie, "and how do you help but feel a little intimidated." McQuarrie enjoyed his art education, but after just five semesters he decided it was time to move on. "I wasn't sure that I wanted to be a commercial artist," he recalled. "I didn't want to be a salesman. It was probably lucrative, but I wasn't very excited about it."

In the late 1950s, in addition to doing some freelance creative work such as book covers, McQuarrie returned to drawing his beloved machinery. "I developed some painting that centered around my kind of subject matter: aircraft, steam engines, and all sorts of machinery," he said. A series of illustrator jobs followed at companies like Kaiser Graphic Arts and Litton Industries, in the San Francisco Bay Area. At Litton, McQuarrie worked with the Advanced Development Laboratories on aerospace technology, including power-assisted exo-suits not unlike those that appear in modern science-fiction films. "It was really exotic research, and I didn't fully understand it," he said. "But I was interested and enjoyed listening to the scientists talk about it. It made an interesting job for me."

McQuarrie returned to Seattle in 1963. His parents were now living in the area, and he once again found himself positioned at Boeing, though this trajectory would be different from his prior stints with the firm. Boeing was developing a Supersonic Transport to compete with the Concorde and had hired a Los Angeles group called Graphic Films to create promotional films about the developing craft. Graphic Films, as it turns out, was led by Lester Novros, a University of Southern California professor who included among his students George Lucas as well as Lucas's friend and future director Hal Barwood. In the spring of 1966, Barwood was visiting Boeing with the Graphic Films team when he met McQuarrie. "Ralph showed us a huge painting—four or five feet across—of the actual version of the Supersonic Transport they were proposing," says Barwood. "We thought, wow. It was a stunning illustration." McQuarrie worked closely with the Graphic Films team, even spending several weeks on loan to their studio in Los Angeles. "The thing about Ralph's work is that it's not super real, but it has a realistic side to it that grips you and that comes through the illustration surface; I think that's one of his main talents," says Barwood. While the SST was never realized, Boeing

McQuarrie during his time in the military, with signature smoking pipe.

A page from the sketchbook McQuarrie kept during his eleven-month tour of Korea circa 1951 or 1952. The artist's initials are visible in the lower right corner.

transitioned into the 747 project shortly thereafter, and McQuarrie produced many illustrations of that craft as well.

Later that year McQuarrie left Boeing for the last time, returning to Los Angeles. In 1967 he joined a small animation company called Reel 3, so named because it was a three-man company. At Reel 3, McQuarrie created animation for CBS News' coverage of the Apollo space program. "We did animated sequences the part that couldn't be covered by television," remembered McQuarrie. "It was very limited animation, just this rocket shrieking through the sky, flames behind it. And there's some parts that come off the rocket—the big booster drops off." McQuarrie was proud of his involvement with the CBS Apollo broadcasts especially Apollo 11, the moon landing mission. "I felt like I was part of the space program," recalled McQuarrie.

An added benefit of McQuarrie's work at Reel 3 was making connections in the film industry. "It was an accident, really, of getting connected with people who worked in film, and worked on film effects, and film titles because of the people that came and went at the animation company," he said. Among those who walked through the doors of Reel 3 was visual effects pioneer Douglas Trumbull, who worked at Graphic Films before being drafted by Stanley Kubrick for *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

It was also during this period that McQuarrie was exposed to filmmaking processes such as storyboarding and animation. "I became familiar with a film language," he recalled. In fact, while doing storyboards for an Encyclopaedia Britannica film called *Time*, Ralph saw Lucas's student film *Electronic Labyrinth: THX-1138 4EB* (1967). "I was amazed at how good it was," he remembered. "I didn't know who George was at the time. I didn't know he was there. I left the screening room and went back to work."

New connections and contacts led to McQuarrie's first job illustrating a movie poster. "I did a poster for a man named Charles B. Pierce," he said. "It was a monster picture, *The Legend of Boggy Creek* [1972]. And that was a success, so on the strength of that I began to get quite a few posters to do."

It was around this same time that McQuarrie crossed paths with Hal Barwood again, and late in 1971 Barwood contacted McQuarrie about illustrating some concepts for a new film he was developing. "Hal called me up saying that he had a script with his friend Matthew Robbins," said McQuarrie. "They wanted to make some illustrations to help get it into production as a feature film. They remembered my illustrations for the moon surface, and they had a planet that they wanted to illustrate, and aliens and a spacecraft."

"I thought, 'Man, that guy McQuarrie, wasn't he good. I wonder where he is,'" tells Barwood.

"I completed four illustrations, and they had a lot of people interested, but *Star Dancing* never got into production," said McQuarrie, who nevertheless was excited. After years as a technical illustrator, McQuarrie finally thought, "Gee, I've really found my thing."

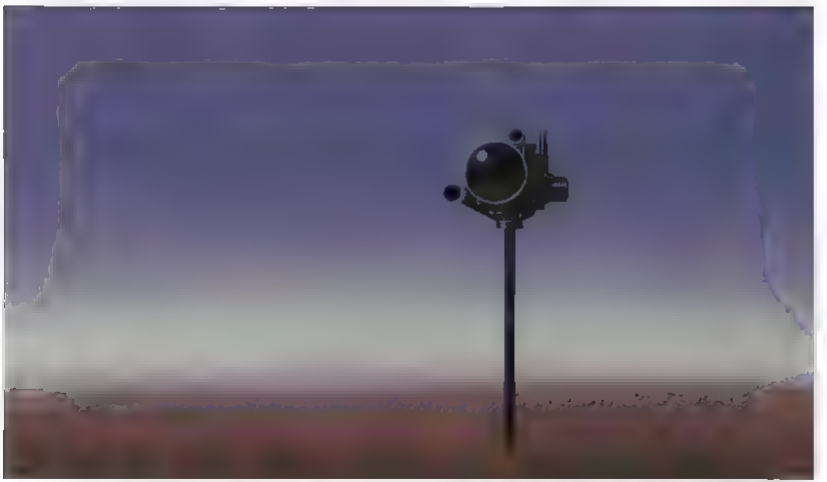
While *Star Dancing* may have stalled as a film, McQuarrie's illustrations were fortuitously seen by Barwood's and Robbins's good friend Lucas. "George saw a *Star Dancing* painting of this gigantic RV rolling across a grassland with a guy in a space suit and a couple of moons hanging in the background, and he just thought it was great," says Barwood.

"George saw the paintings, and he came by my house one evening," remembered McQuarrie. "He talked about his idea for a galactic war picture—intergalactic war. He said it would involve all the aspects of *Flash Gordon*, but done in a sort of *2001* manner, with real, high-fidelity effects. And I thought 'Gee, that sounds ambitious,' you know. And we said goodbye and I never expected to see him again."

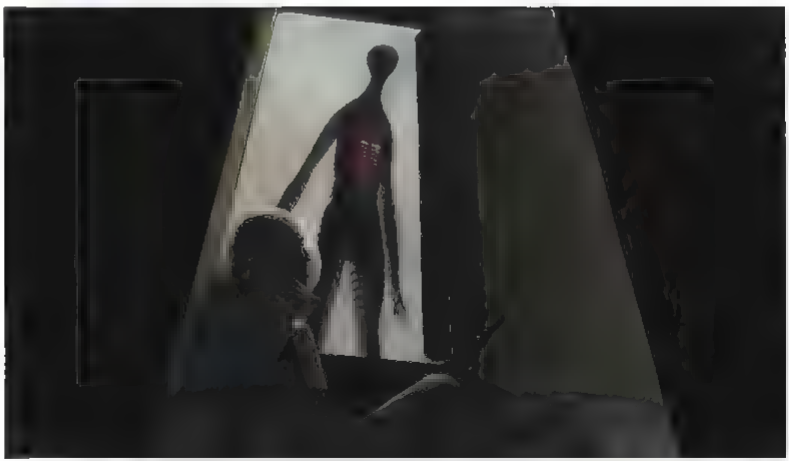
1 An illustration of F-104 aircraft McQuarrie did for his portfolio circa late 1958.

An illustration of the Model 733, an early version of Boeing's Supersonic Transport aircraft, by Ralph McQuarrie, circa 1960s

3 McQuarrie illustrates animation cels for television coverage of the Apollo missions circa late 1960s or early 1970s



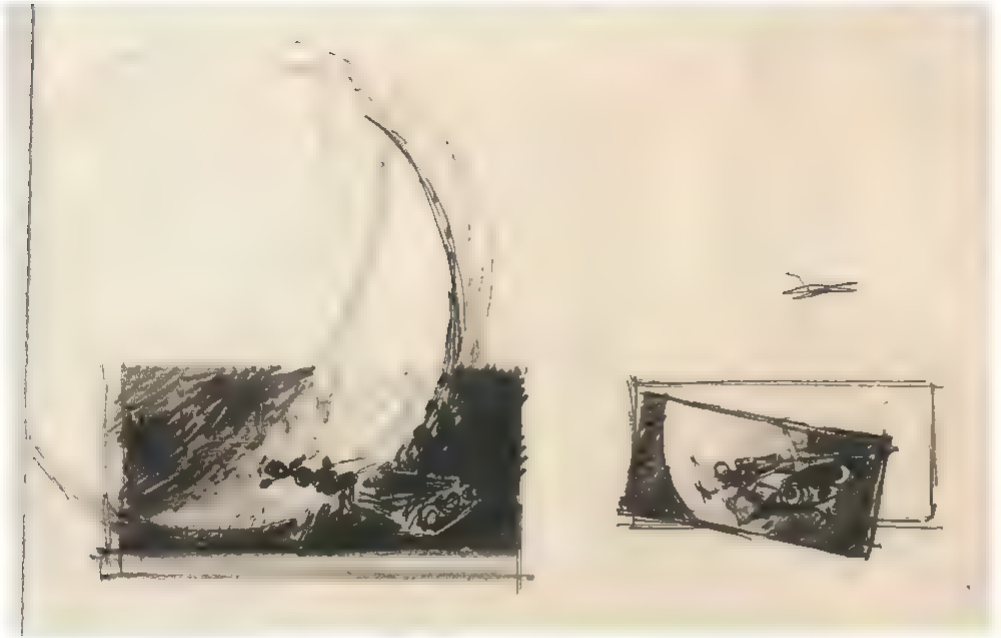
" n the future space men who were exploring planets had come upon a particular planet which they had been assigned to, and it was not a hall covered with grass. They are rolling over this planet [illegible] in this vehicle and they really [illegible] a little [illegible] looking like a person up here [illegible] opening and going [illegible] Meanwhile these little robots [illegible] to transport [illegible] their equipment [illegible] who come [illegible] years. They are [illegible] where communism [illegible] are able [illegible] RALPH McQUARRIE

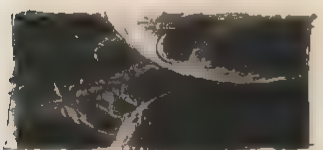


▲ 4 The four production illustrations McQuarrie produced for *Star Dancing* (also known as *Home Free*), a film Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins were developing circa 1975. These are the illustrations that prompted George Lucas to approach McQuarrie for his own space fantasy film

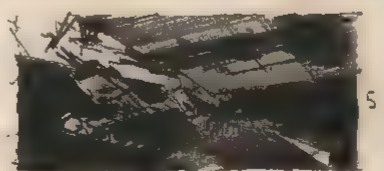
FOLLOWING PAGE Details from concept sketches, Darth Vader (see page 37 ▲)

STAR WARS





1st drawings done for Star Wars.



Rebel close enough to cast long shadow on Star Destroyer

5

STARTING WITH THE SCREENPLAY

IN NOVEMBER 1974, George Lucas made good on a promise he'd made to McQuarrie the prior year and contacted the artist about his space fantasy film. Since their first meeting, Lucas had achieved commercial success with *American Graffiti* (1973) and had completed a draft of what he was calling *The Star Wars*. He had also been developing *Apocalypse Now* with screenwriter John Milius, but decided that *The Star Wars* was the project to pursue, relinquishing *Apocalypse Now* to his friend and fellow director Francis Ford Coppola. Although Universal Studios had passed on *The Star Wars*—space films were far from commercial at that time—Lucas had managed to set the film up at 20th Century-Fox. Lucas and producer Gary Kurtz knew they needed illustrations to keep the pre-production phase moving forward. While McQuarrie likely did his earliest sketches in late 1974 (account-ing records from the time document payments to the artist in November 1974), he began working in earnest upon receiving the second draft screenplay, titled *Adventures of the Starkiller (episode one)*, *The Star Wars* by George Lucas. It was delivered on January 31, 1975, just three days after Lucas completed the script.

"Gary Kurtz and George stopped by with a script, and we arranged right there in a twenty-minute meeting what I was going to get paid and what I was going to do," said McQuarrie. "They wanted four or five paintings. So they said to just read it, and find some things that I think would be good to illustrate, and they'd be back in a few weeks. I learned that one of George's good traits is that he doesn't swamp you with tons of pep talk. His first script [*sic*] was quite thorough, but he doesn't hang over your shoulder."

In addition to the script, Lucas had prepared a packet of reference materials for the illustrator including vintage illustration art, science-fiction and fantasy paintings (including several from novel covers), comic art, stills from *Metropolis* (1927), real-world military photographs, and his own loose sketches for things such as the starships. The script itself was adorned with an illustration by Esteban Maroto, from a Flash Gordon tribute to noted artist Alex Raymond. "George had a lot of ideas about how this picture could look," McQuarrie added. "I think the look of the picture was almost as interesting, or more interesting, to him than the plot. He would keep reading through material—science-fiction illustrations of the past from the magazine *Amazing Stories* and so forth. He wanted to get all this on the screen. He could see it in his mind."

Contrary to legend, Lucas did not commission the paintings to sell his film to Fox—the studio, acting on executive Alan Ladd Jr.'s faith in the project, had been on board for more than a year when Lucas contacted McQuarrie. Instead, McQuarrie's artwork would serve as a launching point to begin discussing the project with key crew personnel in an effort to solidify the expected costs, which needed to be communicated to Fox before they could move forward. "I needed to visualize some of those scenes," Lucas says. "I wanted Ralph to do some paintings so we could have a little bit better idea of what we were going to do. I had a list of about ten scenes that I wanted to have painted. Some of the paintings would just give visualization to some of the more intricate problems, and some of them we did for matte paintings to show what a matte shot was going to look like when finished."

"Thumbnail sketches (photocopy), circa late 1974: spaceships and planets
An early sketch of Mos Eisley, a photocopy with the original in pencil and marker."

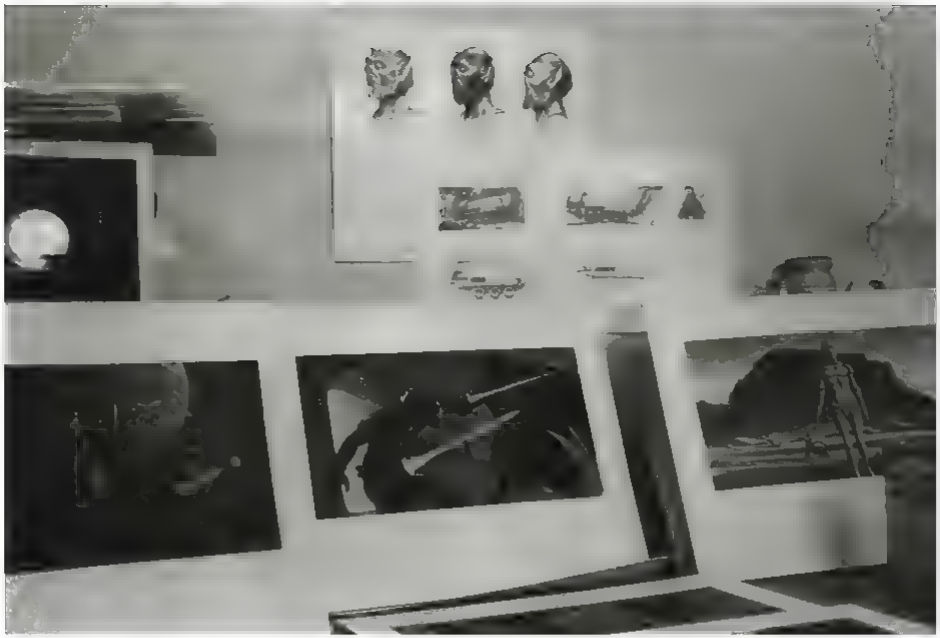
9 "Thumbnail sketches, circa late 1974: spaceships sketch and Dak Noga treasure encounter
... and 3 are the first sketches McQuarrie created for *Star Wars*. ... Many of McQuarrie's sketches, as with Mos Eisley, ... 'don't survive'—we have to ... [which] have developed considerably ... some scene before he began ... [illegible] ... [illegible]. Viewing model page 63 [of] *The Creature Kingdom*, a Dak Noga, described in the second draft as ... [illegible] ... [illegible] ... [illegible]

1

"The script was not easy to read, so we knew we needed artwork to show the crew," adds Kurtz. "We were trying to explain what the film was like using book cover art and some space photographs, but it didn't capture the proper flavor." McQuarrie began sketching at his home studio in Los Angeles, drawing inspiration from Lucas's visual aids as he translated the director's descriptions into original characters and settings. "I started reading the [second draft] script and thought, 'Boy, this script is really sprawling,'" McQuarrie said. "I loved the general premise: It had oodles of chances to invent interesting objects and characters, which I got into right away. When I read something I get a picture in my mind, so I just went right ahead and started. I made some little sketches of spacecraft coming around from behind the planet."

McQuarrie's earliest *Star Wars* illustrations are small pencil thumbnails in a cinematic aspect ratio, a format that he would become known for. Lucas visited McQuarrie again on February 4, less than a week after he delivered the script. "I had sketches for George the first time he came back. I had sketches for Artoo and had started on Darth Vader, Threepio, and everything," he said. "George would look at my pencil sketches, and we'd talk about what each thing should look like. I felt that as much as anything, he expected from me the kind of hand that could give the glorious look that he'd hoped for—all the light would be there, and the textures, and the excitement of this thing visually."

A background in technical illustration made the concept artist the ideal collaborator for Lucas, who had known since their initial meeting that McQuarrie was his first choice as the film's concept illustrator. "A lot of the artwork in the early seventies was incredibly cartoony and psychedelic," recalls Kurtz. "It wasn't very realistic. Both George and I felt that Ralph was perfect for what we needed because his style was realistic enough to be believable and imaginative enough that you



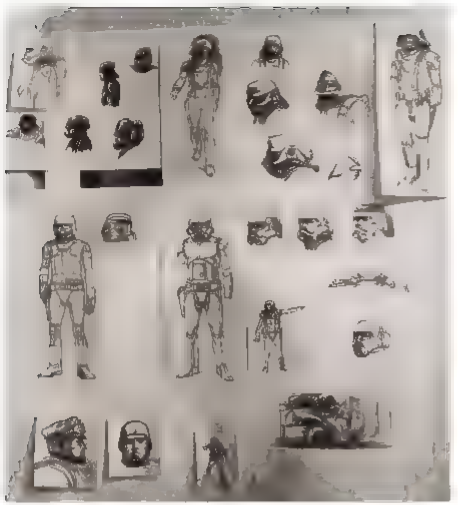
1 George Lucas conveys ideas to Ralph McQuarrie in the latter's Los Angeles home studio circa April 4, 1975. (Photograph by Ed Summer.)

2 A batch of early production illustrations in McQuarrie's studio, circa April 4, 1975. (Photograph by Ed Summer.)

could push it into the science-fiction/fantasy world very easily, without it being silly. We felt he was the perfect combination of that."

"George was very interested in science-fiction illustration and in fact wanted to be an illustrator himself at one time," McQuarrie said. With his interest in illustration art, comic books, and other visual media, Lucas recognized the effect that a visionary could have. He was also able to hire McQuarrie, who had relatively little film industry experience, at a more favorable rate than an experienced production designer would have cost. "Having an illustrator who could paint the kind of images he wanted was a natural thing for this kind of project," said McQuarrie. "I think most production designers are more architects—interior designer–type people—who are concerned about getting all the architecture right for a certain period and designing things so that the set works for the camera. I was not concerned with that at all, and I could be very relaxed while creating all kinds of creatures and robots that maybe couldn't be made. George wasn't concerned at that point about whether they could be made, he just wanted the atmosphere of the picture. Later I found out that it's a very unusual thing for a production designer to do a painting, because of the time involved."

Lucas had engaged the services of another artist just prior to McQuarrie—model maker Colin Cantwell. Cantwell was hired in late 1974 to produce concepts and three-dimensional models of spacecraft and vehicles, including the pirate ship, X-wing starfighter, TIE fighter, Death Star skyhopper, landspeeder and sand-crawler. These represent the earliest vehicle designs for *Star Wars*. Cantwell had film industry experience, having worked on *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and like McQuarrie had met George Lucas through Hal Barwood. As Cantwell developed ship designs, Lucas showed them to McQuarrie and he began incorporating several into his production illustrations. Cantwell's Y-wing fighter appears prominently in several



illustrations, as do his Death Star, TIE fighter, and pirate ship designs. "I went by Colin's place quite a bit and would make photographs of the models as he produced them," he said. "I was putting them into the paintings, and I would update the paintings as Colin would get further into developing them."

The third artist Lucas worked with in early pre-production was Alex Tavoularis, who began storyboarding many of the film's early sequences in February 1975. "I think we asked Ralph about storyboards at one point, and at that time he said he didn't think he would be able to do as good a job with storyboards as concept art," says Kurtz. Tavoularis was provided with reference copies of some of McQuarrie's illustrations, and his storyboards therefore contain many McQuarrie designs, as well as Cantwell's ships. While Tavoularis was working out sequences, and Cantwell was producing additional vehicle models, McQuarrie's illustrations remained the guiding light for production. "As far as the look of the film, Ralph's artwork was the benchmark as to what we were attempting to capture," Kurtz says.

The initial batch of five to six paintings completed by McQuarrie have become some of the most highly regarded concept artworks in the history of cinema. "George wanted me to do the kind of paintings that I had done for Hal Barwood," McQuarrie said, referring to the drawings he'd done of *Star Dancing* for Lucas's filmmaking friend. "He wanted them to look really nice and finished, like he wanted them to look on the screen, and to be idealistic. George would come back every couple of weeks, and I'd have a painting or two and some more pencil work." Completed between late January or early February and March 1975, he loosely titled the works "Artoo and Threepio leave the pod in the desert," "Laser duel," "Imperial city, Alderaan city floats in gray clouds," "Battle for Death Star (fighters dive on sphere)," and "Cantina." A sixth illustration of the TIE fighter pilot was also done early on in McQuarrie's time on the project, though he did not note the specific dates it was painted on. Many of McQuarrie's calendar notes from his early period on *Star Wars* are entered simply as "*Starkiller*," taken from the cover of the script he worked from.

Having been more than satisfied with McQuarrie's initial efforts, the working relationship continued with a commission of additional illustrations by Lucas and Kurtz. "I really trusted Ralph," Lucas says. "I described things to him, and he would just go off and do what he thought I was talking about." The director and illustrator continued to meet throughout 1975, whenever Lucas traveled south from his base in the San Francisco Bay Area. The meetings consisted of review and discussion on the artist's latest thumbnails and sketches, with Lucas frequently showing McQuarrie additional sources of inspiration.

The illustrator produced another batch of paintings, a series of costume design sketches, and numerous other drawings as required by the director. As Lucas began to assemble his heads of departments—the key people who would aid him in creating the film—he used McQuarrie's growing body of work as a visual aid to convey his ideas. "The paintings were done so that instead of just coming in cold and starting to wave their arms and describe things, when they got to England they would be able to put the paintings up and say, 'This is the kind of thing we want,'" said McQuarrie. "The paintings have tried to establish an atmosphere for key things in the picture, even though maybe the things weren't rendered exactly as they were in the paintings because of the problems of getting them built."

McQuarrie and his director continued to work closely on the development of the visual aesthetic. "A lot of the forms I came up with, but the basic idea for what it should be was George's thinking," he said. "George really designed it, too. He said to me that he was surprised sometimes about how easily we arrive at things and go onto the next thing. The general effect is the most important thing. Artoo-Detoo could have been a different shape, but essentially he was satisfactory and worked fine, and that's all it needed. So we moved on to the next thing."

In April 1975 Lucas used McQuarrie's paintings to introduce his film to another would-be early visual effects supervisor John Dykstra, who found them inspiring. "McQuarrie's paintings were part of a package I reviewed when I was interviewing with George to do the work," says Dykstra. "They were really cool. To put those images on paper in the context of a story is something that wasn't being done a lot. You've got to remember that science-fiction was explored only on a limited basis in movies at that time, for the most part because the images were hard to create."

Visual effects cameraman Richard Edlund started on the film in June, shortly after Dykstra, and he, too, was suitably impressed. "I saw the paintings and recognized at that time that we had the beginnings of a really great visual project. Ralph basically art directed the whole movie with about a dozen paintings. He was to *Star Wars* what Erté was to Art Deco," says Edlund.

McQuarrie's artistic ability was unquestionable, but Lucas and Kurtz needed a production designer with filmmaking experience. Beyond conceiving of the film's

visuals, a production designer must manage the art department and coordinate the real-world sets in conjunction with the construction department. To that end, Lucas and Kurtz went to Mexico in July 1975 to meet Geoffrey Unsworth, who was being considered as cinematographer, and production designer John Barry. Along with set decorator Roger Christian, they were working on a big-budget Fox film called *Lucky Lady*. Barry and Christian were hired not long afterward, and Lucas and Kurtz visited them in the UK at the end of the month. "George brought out six photocopies of Ralph's paintings. Those paintings became the bible for the film," says Christian. "The painting of See-Threepio in the desert was the reason John Barry took George to Tunisia, and we started building our first Artoo-Detoo directly from the same painting. I can't discount how much of an influence Ralph's work was on how that film got made."

In the filmmaking world, the production designer holds the top position in the art direction hierarchy. This status did not prevent John Barry from recognizing that McQuarrie had very much found something with his designs. "I remember John saying, 'This guy's a genius,'" recalls Christian. "John was really impressed with what Ralph was doing. He fed off talent, and he respected Ralph as he respected George. John loved things like *Barbarella*, and that kind of sci-fi, so he had to bend his preference to what George wanted."

"John Barry was very willing to step in and say, yeah, these are good designs, let's use them," adds Lucas, who had faith in Barry's abilities to produce the sets practically and economically as much as in his design sense.

George Lucas, Ralph McQuarrie, and John Barry met together for the first time in August 1975. McQuarrie had spent the prior four weeks working on costume designs and other elements that needed defining to review with Barry during his visit. "We had three or four days of talks with John Barry to introduce him to the project. I sat in because George thought I could do some sketches while we were talking," recalled McQuarrie. "I made the biggest contribution to the film from a design point of view simply because I was the only designer working on it in the beginning. If John Barry had come in earlier, I'm sure a lot more of it would've been his. I think Barry liked what I had done. He took elements that I had used and enlarged them to more suitable sets. His touch was very, very important in how the film worked. It certainly made the film what it was. Although he used my work kind of like reference material—he would use it to draw from, with his own border sense."

McQuarrie did not realize at this time that many of his designs would be translated so directly to the screen. "My thinking at the time was that what I was doing wasn't final, but somebody else was going to come along and design this stuff," he said. "I thought all I had to do was visualize it to show the kind of thing we were thinking about. I wasn't saying to myself, 'Is this really good enough for a great big 20-million-dollar [sic, motion picture?' So consequently, I had a great deal of fun and enjoyed myself tremendously."

That same month, another key member of the team arrived in the form of industrial design student Joe Johnston, who had started the art department at Industrial Light & Magic. As he advanced designs of ships, models, and other elements that were to be handled by ILM, he too, drew inspiration from McQuarrie's paintings. "I saw Ralph's concept art for *Star Wars* long before I met him," says Johnston. "Color photographs of his early paintings were pinned to the walls of production manager Bob Shepherd's office at the ILM facility when I went to apply for the job on August 11, 1975. I remember looking at the paintings and wondering why they thought they needed another illustrator, but as Ralph himself later told me, he was an illustrator first and a designer second." Johnston went on to art direct much of the visual effects work on the film. He became, like McQuarrie, one of the most seminal contributors to the design of the original trilogy.

Within the growing effects facility, McQuarrie's paintings continued to introduce new stresses to Lucas's vision. Steve Gawley joined the crew as a draftsman (and later model builder) in August, and he met McQuarrie not long after. "I was at ILM in Van Nuys, and he had set up some artwork on a table and was taking pictures of it. I walked up to him and introduced myself, and I was really flabbergasted by how outstanding his work was," says Gawley. "I asked him about his education, and

1 Concept sketches for characters and costumes, circa April 4, 1975. Helmets and breath masks, a term coined by Lucas, were a staple of early costume designs for soldiers. (Photograph by Ed Summer.)

2 The drawing for McQuarrie's "Docking Bay" illustration (see page 70 [2]) rests on McQuarrie's drafting table alongside reference photographs of Colin Cantwell's pirate ship model, circa April 4, 1975. (Photograph by Ed Summer.)

he told me he went to Art Center in LA. So I asked, 'If I take the same classes you took, could I draw like this?' And he politely chuckled and patted me on the back and said, 'Sorry kid, you've got to be born with it.' He was one of those talents that could just do anything. I remember when George would visit and we would ask him questions about how he wanted this or that. Eventually it got to a point he would say, 'Just follow Ralph's drawing.'"

Throughout 1975, Lucas had been financing much of the pre-production work on the film himself. Fox was signed on to finance and distribute it, but they were still negotiating the terms of the deal, and the budget of the picture. Lucas was unwilling to let the project fall into limbo, so he injected more than $400,000 of his own capital (largely profits from *American Graffiti*) into The Star Wars Corporation. "We were in active pre-production on the film, but we presented Fox with a budget higher than what we originally said," recalls Kurtz. "If Fox had backed out, it would have been very difficult to get anybody else to participate. They responded that they would have to take it to the Fox board—this was in the autumn of 1975. We were working toward shooting in the spring, but Fox wouldn't make a final decision until the December board meeting."

McQuarrie's artwork was therefore put forth not to sell the film, but to help the Fox board digest Kurtz's budget and to instill confidence in the uniqueness of the project. "Prior to that meeting we sent them all of the artwork we had, including Ralph's paintings and sketches, some of Joe Johnston's artwork, pictures of models that ILM had done, and the storyboards that had been done," says Kurtz. "Fox's initial decision on the film was made before there was any artwork, but Ralph's material was helpful in getting them to move along to the next step." While the artwork no doubt made an impression, according to Fox board member Warren Hellman, Alan Ladd Jr.'s confidence in the project was the single biggest factor in the decision to move forward. "In the middle of December the board said, 'Yes, go ahead,'" recalls Kurtz. "They thought the artwork looked unusual, and we were emphasizing that all through this process. We were looking to make a film that was not like anything else."

The news that Fox was ready to move to the next stage was well received by everyone in the *Star Wars* camp, including McQuarrie. "I was amazed to hear that this movie was going to be made, because my own feeling was it was too big of a project to ever get made on a budget that would be reasonable," he said.

As he shifted from pre-production to production, Lucas sought to retain McQuarrie and make use of his talents wherever possible. On December 17, he asked the illustrator to do some of the matte work on the film. "At first George said maybe I could work with John Dykstra in visual effects," McQuarrie said. "John didn't particularly want me, as he had other people that he wanted. I think he had Joe Johnston, and some other people, and he thought that he himself would do some of the design work. I had already contributed something to almost every facet of the film, so I thought it was fair enough to let him and his people do something. So George said that maybe I could do some matte paintings, and that I should meet Harrison Ellenshaw, who was then Peter Ellenshaw."

Harrison Ellenshaw, son of famous matte artist Peter Ellenshaw and already a recognized artist in his own right, was approached to do matte work for *The Star Wars* in early 1976. "Production supervisor Jim Nelson [uncredited] visited me at Disney and showed me eight or nine of Ralph's photo blow-ups," Ellenshaw recalls. "I didn't know of Ralph McQuarrie before that, but I saw those and said, 'Come on. If you're not impressed by that....' It was unlike anything I had ever seen before." Ellenshaw agreed to do the film and soon met with McQuarrie, who had no prior matte painting experience. As Ellenshaw was pre-engaged on a Disney film at the time, McQuarrie began a number of matte paintings in January, before Ellenshaw was officially on the film. Ellenshaw joined him upon completion of the Disney project, and the two of them went on to produce all of the required matte paintings for *Star Wars* with McQuarrie concentrating on the planets.

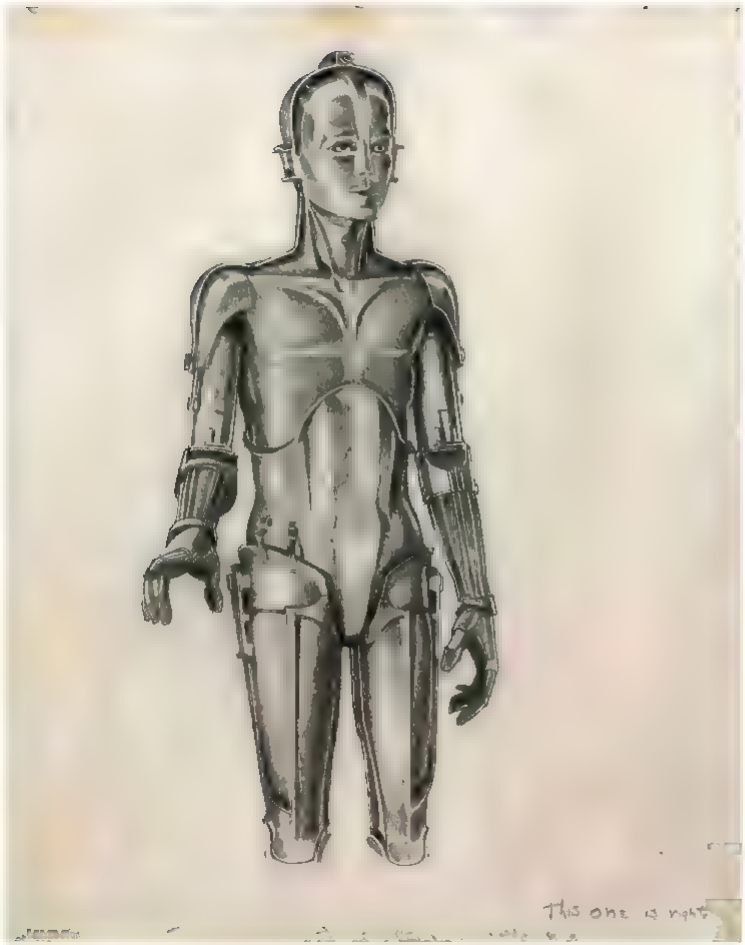
McQuarrie remained a signature member of Lucas's team throughout 1976, producing artwork for one-sheet poster concepts, novel covers, and T-shirt art. When Lucas needed additional aliens designed for pickup shoots in the fall, McQuarrie was one of the artists he called on. The venerable illustrator also assisted at ILM with work outside the matte department—he painted the model miniature of the Death Star (in his Los Angeles garage) and did a painting of the Tatooine horizon for an insert point-of-view shot through Luke's binoculars. As was his nature, McQuarrie assisted wherever needed. "We weren't the studio, so there weren't many lines being drawn as to what you could or couldn't do," says Dykstra. "We took advantage of Ralph's talents as we took advantage of many of the talented people who were there but weren't previously involved in the motion picture business."

In March 1977, McQuarrie finished his work at ILM and went to London to start with production designer Ken Adam on a never-completed *Star Trek* picture.

When *Star Wars* hit the theaters later that year, McQuarrie was one of the many moviegoers who was thoroughly impressed. "I came back from England and got out of the subway station, and it was playing across the street. I had been tuned out on it, even forgotten about it, I wasn't around for the cast and crew screening," said McQuarrie. "I went across the street right then and went in and got in the middle of it. It was amazing. It was a Thursday afternoon in New York, and the theater was full of people and they were having a hell of a time watching this movie. I wanted to see what the things that I had designed looked like in the final film. A lot of the things I felt they improved on—sometimes just in small ways. In some cases, I thought my drawings were better. But I respect the problems of building these things. They did a terrific job. I felt like George did about 20 percent of what he would have liked to see, in terms of getting right in there and being an adventure and having everything believable. Still, I was very into that movie. I enjoyed the concept of the movie a lot, and I thought it should be taken seriously."

The success of *Star Wars* gave McQuarrie's designs exposure that most artists only dream of. The global response to the film had a significant impact on the many involved, and McQuarrie was no exception. "After the film came out, it was still playing at Grauman's Chinese Theatre when I was living in Los Angeles," he said. "The sun was setting, and I was walking down Hollywood Boulevard, and there was a little piece of paper blowing along the sidewalk. I picked it up and it was a bubblegum wrapper with Darth Vader on it, I thought, 'Gee, this is just....' When I was a kid I used to pick up these things from Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers and so forth. I had Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon water pistols, and a little spacecraft and so forth. And I was thinking, 'Gee, now I'm one of those people that makes those things.'"

opposite: Detail from production illustration, "Imperial troopers in Death Star corridor," March 26, 1975 (see page 57 [all])



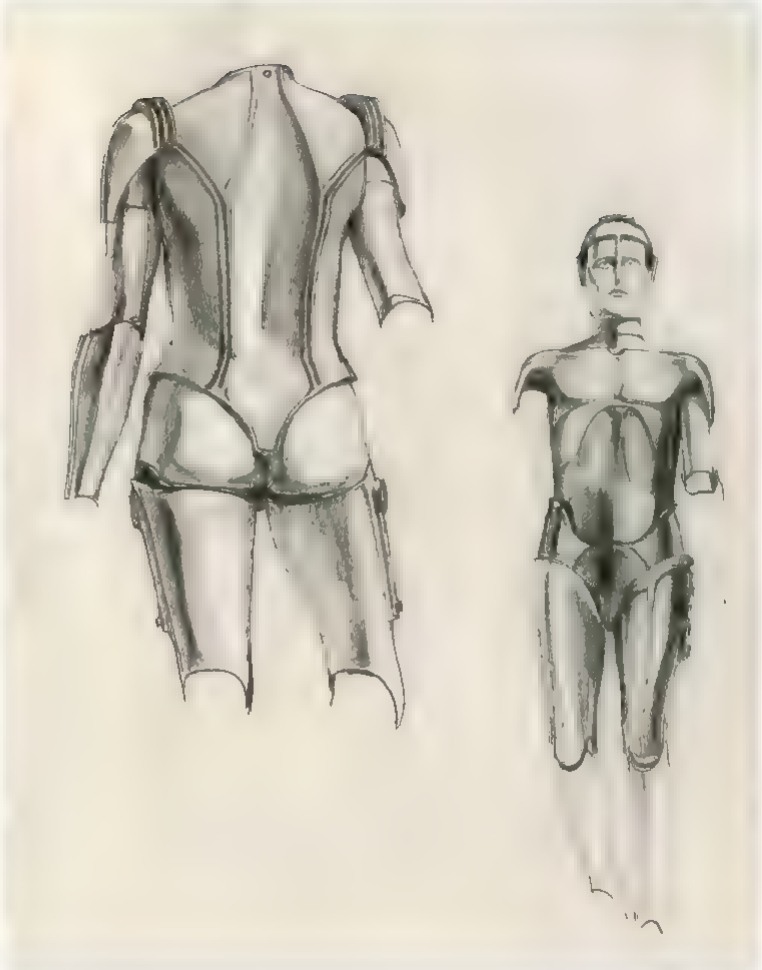
1

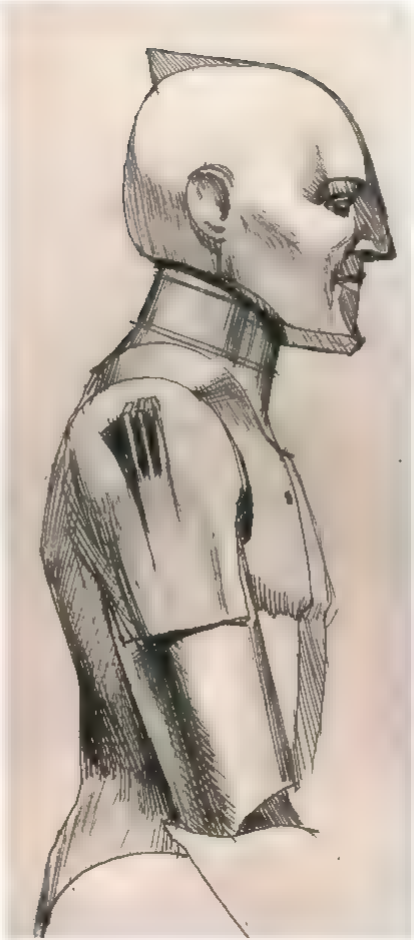
"We had taken things like the *Metropolis* (1927) robot which George brought a photograph of for me to look at. And he said, The *Metropolis* robot would be great, but let's make him a boy instead of a girl, and give it an Art Deco look. At first my feeling was that See-Threepio should have very delicate lines and smooth surfaces, like an Ernest Trova sculpture. George said to make him more like a boy." **McQUARRIE**

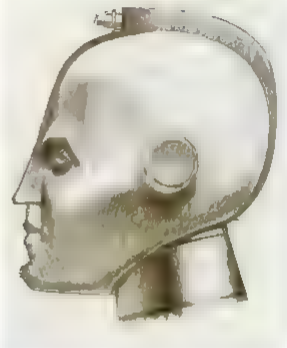
1 **Concept sketch, C-3PO**
C-3PO was inspired by the "Maria" robot from Metropolis (1927). McQuarrie: "This one is right. Annotation likely indicates Lucas satisfaction with the sketch.

2 **Concept sketch, C-3PO head**

3–5 **Concept sketches, C-3PO**







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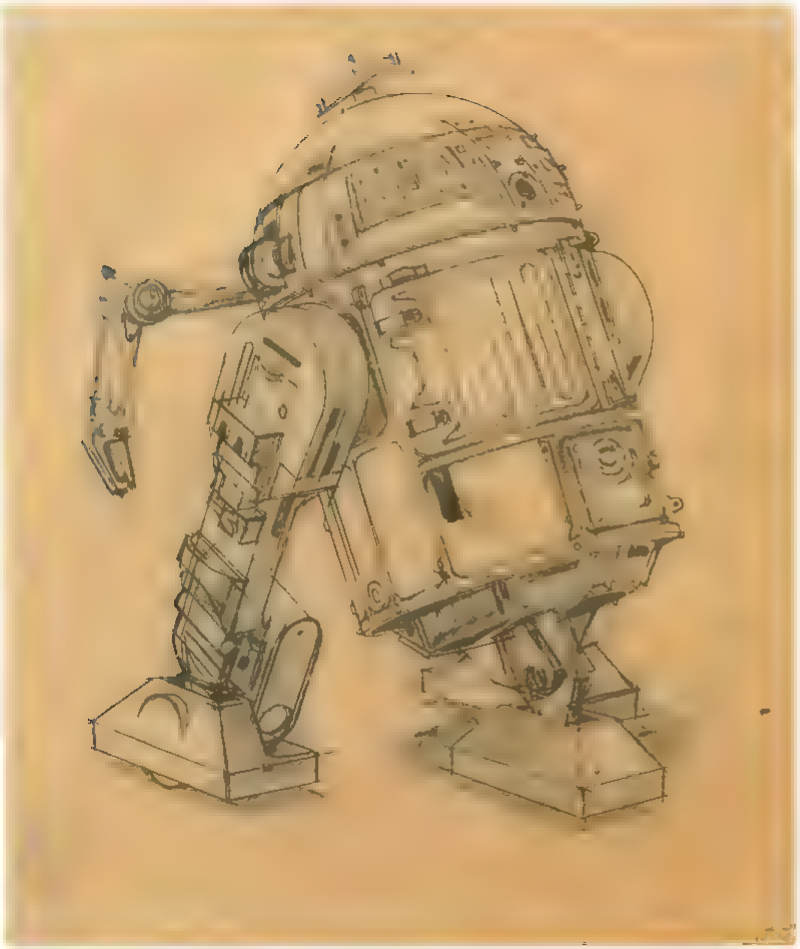
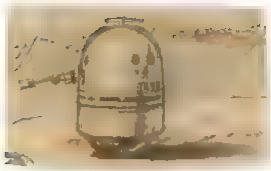
1 Concept sketch (photocopy), C-3PO

2 3 Concept sketches (from transparency), C-3PO
4, more images were lost due to fading from transparency when the original art was not available

4 Concept sketches (from transparency), C-3PO head
The one depicted here is both more human and more mechanoid than the Queen's more Metropolis-styled interpretation

5-7 Concept sketches, C-3PO





"George said that Artoo-Detoo should be a kind of repair guy. He had a picture of the little robots from *Silent Running* (1972). They were like square boxes with legs. So I thought, 'Well, if they're square, I'll make mine round,' which was like a garbage can with a dome on top. Instead of two legs I gave him three legs and figured he'd throw himself forward like a person on crutches (see page 33 [5]). That would be the way he would walk. I had another version of Artoo-Detoo showing a ball bearing underneath the capsule shape of the robot, with a round base at that would rotate [2]. It would have gyros inside so it would be able to run around like that—very difficult to do with the technology at the time. Could be easily done today, but in those days we had to use miniatures [sic] and they had to actually function somehow.

"Artoo could have been any shape. I could have put a tea cup there and with everyone responding to it, it would take on life." MCQUARRIE

1 3 **Concept sketches, R2-D2**
Rubber cement residue is visible through the paper on a number of McQuarrie's early sketches, as he frequently reassembled sketches as he worked (see page 22 [1]).

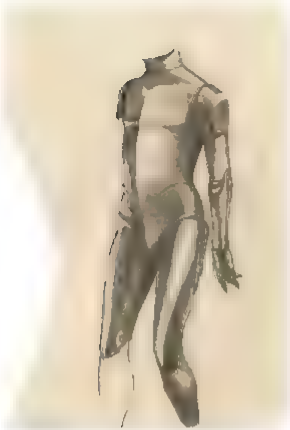
2 **Concept sketch, C-3PO torso**
In the lower left corner of the yellow tape, an early handwritten archive inventory number is visible

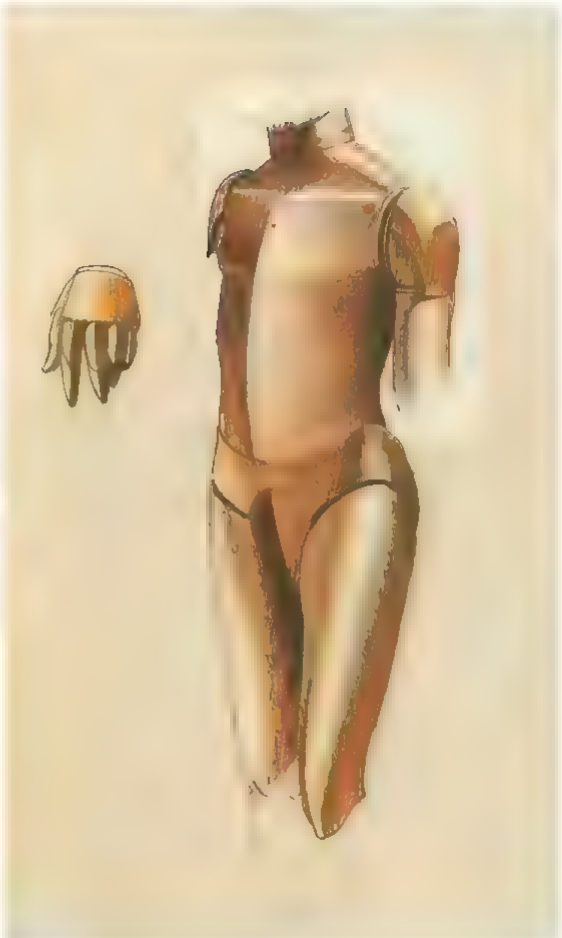
3 **Concept sketch, C-3PO**

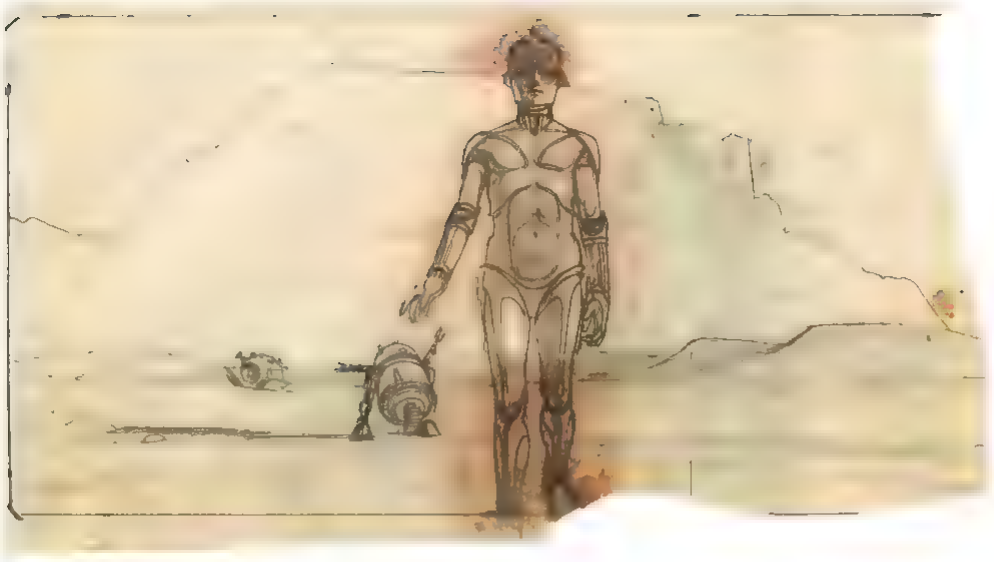
4 **Concept sketch, C-3PO torso with ab-like details (see page 33 [3])**

5 **Concept sketch, C-3PO hand and arm**

6 **Concept sketch, C-3PO hand and torso**







2

FROM THE SECOND DRAFT BY GEORGE LUCAS, JANUARY 1975

PLANET UTAPAU EDGE OF THE DUNE SEA

JUNDLAND, or "No Man's Land" where the rugged desert mesas meet the foreboding dune sea. The two helpless astro-robots kick up clouds of dust as they leave the lifepod, and clumsily work their way across the desert coastline. The stubby Artoo struggles desperately to keep up with the long-legged Threepio

"I picked some landscape from a photograph. I liked this cliff, and I just put the sand dunes in. I can't remember where this particular piece of cliff is—I think it's on the Oregon coast. *[Author's note: the cliff is actually Morro Rock in Morro Bay, California.]* But there was water here in this picture, and I just stole the cliff. I will take a scene that I like and decide about the entrance of light. The desert scene is a good example with its raking light. I would never choose to make it high noon because it doesn't look as interesting. But when you've got a raking light, when a moon will stand out in the sky, and with the long shadows, and the warmth from the light which unifies the painting, that is what I like to do." **MCQUARRIE**

"My favorite Ralph McQuarrie paintings are the original five that I was shown when I applied for the job in August of 1975. I love them because they were painted by Ralph before 'reality' set in. Many elements would change into the designs we know, but these were Ralph doing what his instincts told him was right, and the resulting works are definitely my favorites." **JOE JOHNSTON** EFFECT'S ILLUSTRATOR AND DESIGNER

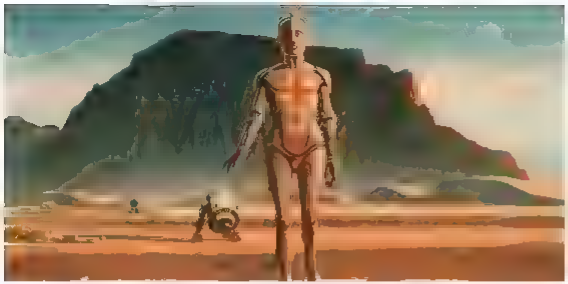
1 **Drawing for production illustration, "Artoo and Threepio leave the pod in the desert"**
McQuarrie produced drawings on vellum, which were used to outline the painted illustration on art board. See page 34 for more on the artist's process. When titles are shown in quotes, they are the artist's own titles, often taken from his daily calendars of the period.

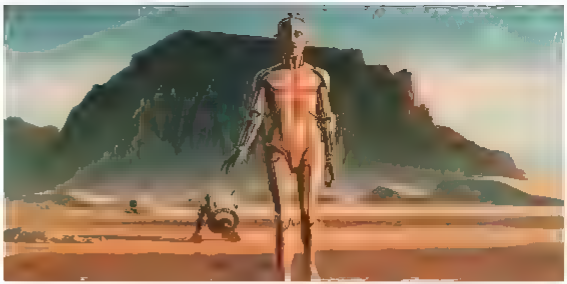
2 Thumbnail sketch for production illustration, "Artoo and Threepio leave the pod in the desert"

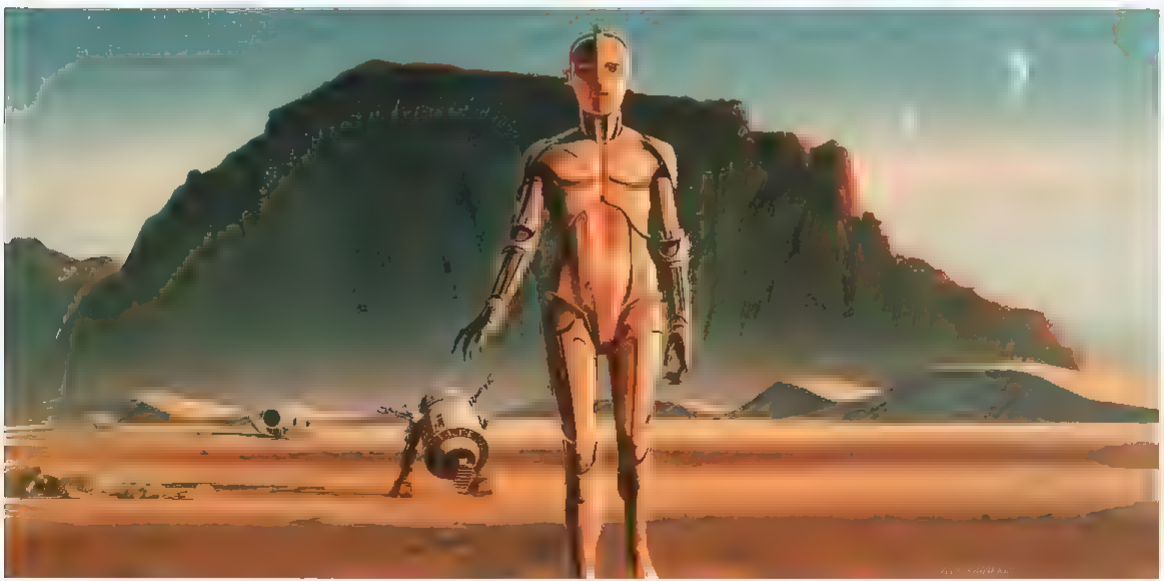
3 Production illustration, "Artoo and Threepio leave the pod in the desert," version 1, circa late January or early February 1975
This is the first production illustration McQuarrie completed for the film. C-3PO has a humanoid face in this first rendering of the painting, and an unusual organic abdomen.

4 Production illustration (photoprint), "Artoo and Threepio leave the pod in the desert," version 2
McQuarrie rewired the painting twice, presumably at the request of Lucas. The first revision altered C-3PO's face and abdomen.

5 Production illustration, "Artoo and Threepio leave the pod in the desert," version 3
The second illustration revision further adjusted the golden droid's eyes and mouth. This is the early version of the illustration McQuarrie signed.







THE METHOD

AT AGE FORTY-FIVE, Ralph McQuarrie was already a veteran illustrator when he started working on *Star Wars*, with a variety of life experiences that gave him a foundation from which to draw inspiration for his work. "Ideas evolve," said McQuarrie. "They come from the subconscious, they come from looking through magazines, they come from what I have seen in my life—things that have impressed me in terms of atmosphere and color and light. I walk out into the space mentally, the one I am going to paint, and get a feel for it. Like in a dream.

"Your mind is a very brilliant piece of equipment, and you just send your little trolley back into the files, and it's got a certain question on it, so to speak. It says, 'I need a so-and-so.' And very loosely, it picks up all the stuff that can possibly fit that problem, and on the way back out to the consciousness, it juggles it and throws off a few things that are not so good, and you come up with an idea. It comes to me, just as a result of that trip that I had to make; it does it all the time, every day. Somebody says something, your mind goes back to the file and gets out the stuff that applies, brings it out to the front—organized. It's all intellectual, it's all thinking. I have a feeling that I come with the best ideas first. That's what's fresh and just pops into mind. It doesn't take me very long to come to that point."

For putting his ideas down on paper, McQuarrie's material arsenal consisted primarily of graphite, charcoal or colored pencils, the occasional pen or marker, and Designers Gouache and Cel-Vinyl paints. He worked with traditional brushes as well as an airbrush when he needed to create atmosphere, highlighting and realistic gradations in his artworks. In the pre-digital age, he sometimes used an opaque projector to quickly enlarge or reduce drawings for refinement.

McQuarrie's process included several steps to reach a fully realized production illustration. "I'll take one of my little pencil sketches and put it in my projector to enlarge it," he says. "Or I'll start over with a few other ideas to improve it. Once that is done, I've got a drawing to the size of the painting on tissue, in line form. I'll then tape off a piece of illustration board and usually give it a coat of some color that's kind of in between the range of color and value that I'm going to finally see in the painting."

If he was uncertain on the color scheme of a painting, McQuarrie would produce small thumbnail paintings to explore options. He produced the initial outline for his illustrations by tracing over his drawing after applying graphite or white chalk to the reverse side. "Usually I'll paint a background right on through the lines, if there's only a few small things that overlap that background," he said. "Then I will trace the next group of middle-ground lines, and paint those in while avoiding the broad areas where things are going to appear in the foreground. The last thing I'll do is put the tracing back on the whole painting and trace in what I've got in the foreground and paint that in. I'll continue to work on the things in the background and foreground to make it all balance, and I use airbrush to darken whole areas of the painting. Perhaps I'll use Cel-Vinyl for most of that preliminary work. Then I use Designers Gouache to finish the final details, and final touches, and use airbrush to get a little glow around highlights and so forth. But most of the painting is all done with regular sable brushes."

The size of the production illustrations was dictated by the time available to complete them. "The size I work is about 20 inches wide, or 25 inches wide. It's fairly small, because I feel that I can work faster that way. I can get more done in a shorter time, just because I'm concerned less with the little details that I get into if I've got a large painting," McQuarrie said. "Since I'm after a general impression, I'll go for a smaller size. It just goes faster."

McQuarrie typically took two to three days to produce a complete production painting. His accomplished technique produced stunning illustrations with a wonderfully realistic quality. McQuarrie's legacy is not only as a master designer, but as a master fine artist.

McQuarrie works with a Pilot Razor Point pen on *The Empire Strikes Back* at Elstree Studios, London. The Designers Gouache paints he frequently worked with are visible in the foreground, as is his airbrush. On the wall behind McQuarrie are frisket masks used to airbrush detailing onto production illustrations.

"Darth Vader was described with a large, hard hat, way low, almost like a samurai warrior or a fisherman's hat with a very grotesque breath mask over his face and flowing capes and a mechanical armor chest with a computer read-out on it. That was really the way I described it and Ralph just drew it up. I said that I wanted it to be all black." GEORGE LUCAS WRITER/DIRECTOR

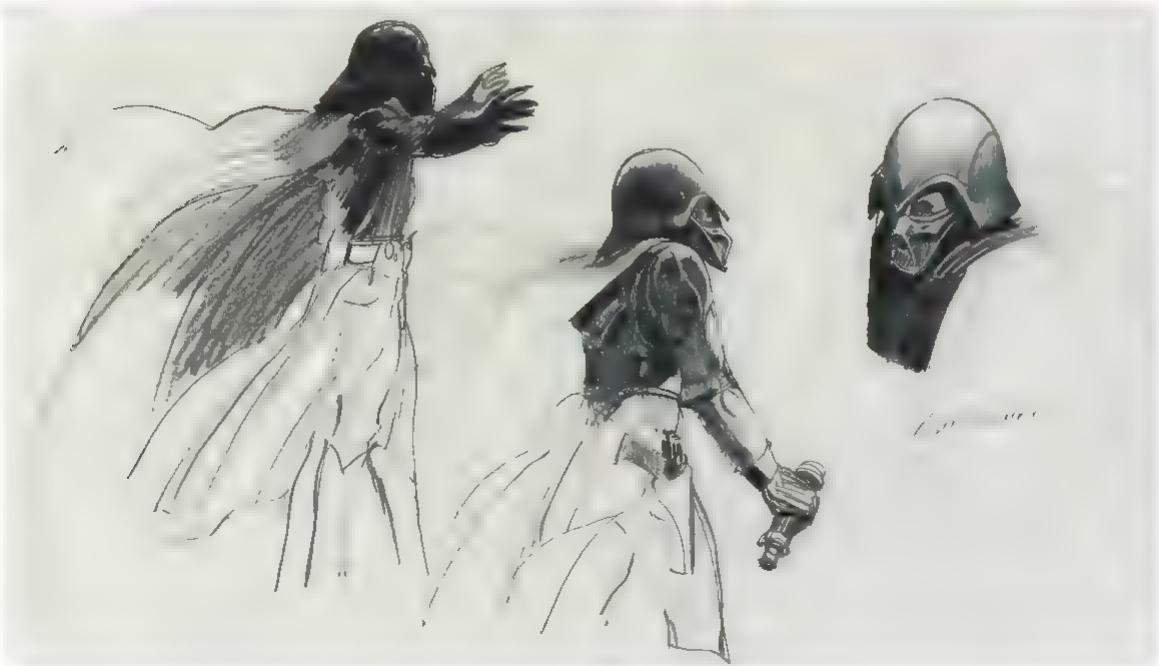
"I worked on breath masks for a while and I came up with this goggle look and this sort of dog-like snout which looked kind of mean with the slots in it, sort of like teeth. I think I did the sketches for Darth Vader in about a day and a half total. I was moving very fast and didn't have all week to fool around with Darth Vader—I had a lot of other things to work on. Darth Vader in the movie is better than my sketches because he looks huge. He looms up over you. My Vader [...] looked kind of hunched down, a little wolf-like, evil-looking little character." RALPH MCQUARRIE

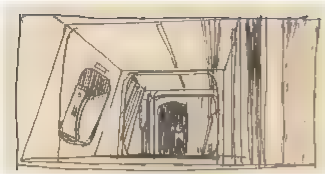
"As an eleven-year-old kid I found McQuarrie featured in *Starlog* magazine, *Cinefantastique*, and other magazines that celebrated his brilliance. I think it was only a few years later that I bought the *Star Wars Portfolio* by Ralph McQuarrie, a publication that gloriously reprinted his original paintings. There are so many that are gorgeous. His early renderings of Darth Vader are particularly striking. I also love his cantina paintings, and the stormtroopers with lightsabers. What's cooler than that?!"
J.J. ABRAMS WRITER/DIRECTOR *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*

3 **Concept sketches, Death Starkiller**
In the second draft script by LUCAS, Death Starkiller is introduced as a twenty-five-year-old captain, with his face covered by a "small, ornate face mask." He wears the "loose-fitting robes of a Jedi knight."

4 **Concept sketches, Darth Vader**

5 **Concept sketches, Darth Vader**
The helmet sketch [right] has been printed frequently in the past, but only from a photographic transparency—the photograph caused the helmet and chest to appear softer than the fiberglass, and the helmet appeared distorted. It is accurately reproduced here for the first time.





FROM THE SECOND DRAFT, JANUARY 1975

VADER

I am Lord Darth Vader, first Knight of the Sith, and right hand to His Emissary Prince Xizor. Valorum, the Master of the Bogan. You will not mock me, or my Master, for the Ashla is weak, and the FORCE OF OTHERS cannot save you now.

The fearsome dark knight ignites his laser sword and takes a defensive stance. The two galactic warriors stand perfectly still for a few moments, sizing each other up and waiting for the right moment. Deak Starkiller seems to be under increasing pressure and strain, as if an invisible weight were being placed upon him. He shakes his head and, blinking, tries to clear his eyes.

VADER (CONT'D)
Your powers are weak.

Deak makes a sudden lunge at the huge warrior but is checked by a lightning movement of the SITH. A second masterful slash-stroke by Deak is again blocked by his evil opponent.

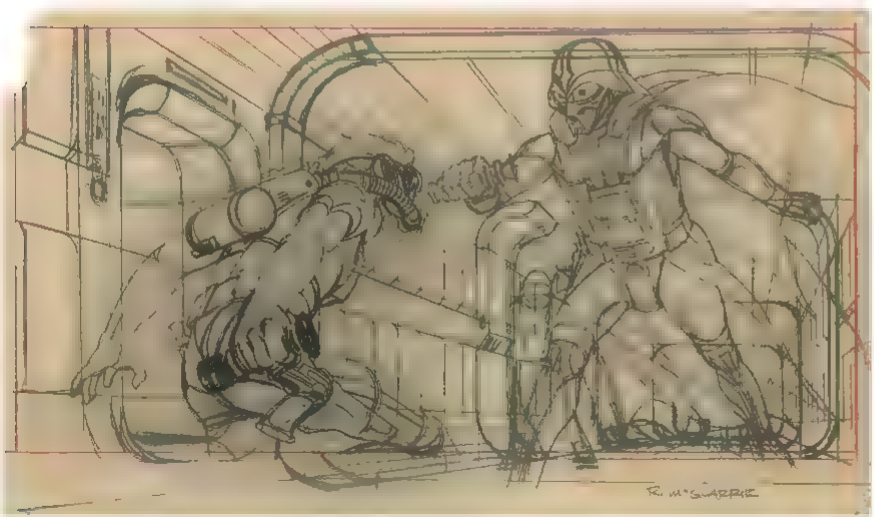
They stand motionless for a few moments, with laser swords locked in mid-air, creating a low buzzing sound.

"I was very concerned with the opening--the first interior shot of the film--that it be sort of spectacular looking opulent and look good." LUCAS

"George said I was a 'lasersword,' and I know that when you project a laser beam, it doesn't just end after three feet. It continues to project out. But because it had to be used in fights, I gave it about the length of a medieval broadsword. I tried to make the laser beam as bright as possible and I changed the colors for the various swords--a color for the good guys and a color for the bad guys. The lightsaber was just a cylinder thing that you could grip in your hands, a little longer than a cavalry saber and more like a two-handed sword.

"...In the discussions we thought we could use breath masks. George coined the phrase, and he said they might be kind of ornate. I didn't know how ornate, or what the nature of ornateness would be in this universe, so I gave them a technical look with tubing coming forward that might support the way they are put together and the way the air comes down through them, with vents, etc." McQUARRIE

"I had an immediate inspiration by looking at the painting of Vader and Luke [sic]. I could hear the lightsaber. From seeing that picture I could hear it."
BEN BURTT, SPECIAL DIALOGUE AND SOUND EFFECTS



1, 2 Thumbnail sketches for production illustration, "Laser duel"

3 Drawing for production illustration, "Laser duel"
Visible behind Vader are troops that the artist elected not to transfer to the final illustration.

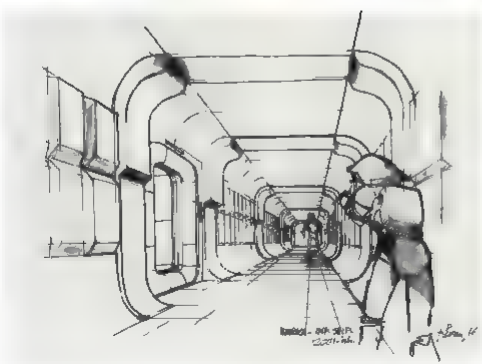
4 Production illustration, "Laser duel," February 24-25, 1975
While commonly interpreted as Luke, the character facing off with Vader on the rebel ship is actually young captain Deak Starkiller as described in the second draft by Lucas.

5 Production drawing by production designer John Barry, rebel ship corridor
Barry worked the setup directly from McQuarrie's "Laser duel" illustration.

6 The final set evolved very little from McQuarrie's "Laser duel" illustration, though the all-white look was considerably more stark than McQuarrie's vision for the interior.

FOLLOWING SPREAD: Detail from production illustration, "Laser duel," February 24-25, 1975

4



FROM THE SECOND DRAFT, JANUARY 1975

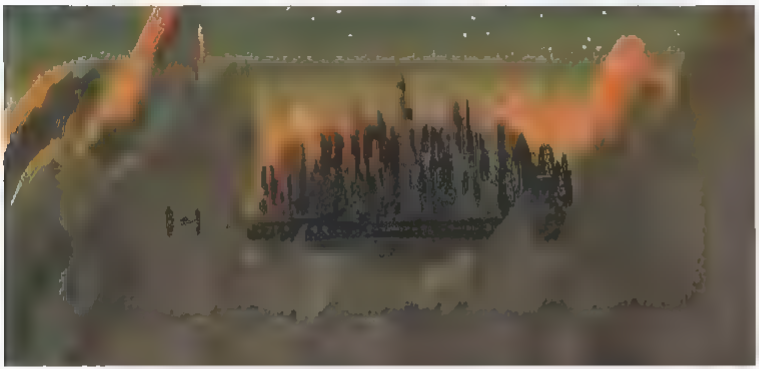
PLANET ALDERAAN — CLOUD SEA

The towering white oxide clouds pass, revealing the Imperial city of Alderaan. The magnificent domed and gleaming city is perched, mushroom-like, on a tall spire which disappears deep into the misty surface of the planet. The little procession of spaceships speeds toward the city.

"One of the original five paintings was the Alderaan painting that we never used in *Star Wars*. At the time, of course, there was no idea of doing another film, so it was just set aside as a nice painting that wasn't going to be relevant to what we were actually going to be doing because the script changed." GARY KURTZ PRODUCER

The thing about writing is that ideas aren't precious; you have to get over the thought that everything you think up is brilliant. When you think of something, you have to be willing to throw it away. Usually, if I like something and I have to drop it, I put it on the shelves and very often end up using it somewhere else later on." LUCAS

"In looking for a certain feeling for Alderaan, I had various architectural elements in mind. George said the city would be floating in the clouds, just levitating there. I thought, 'Well, that's sort of like a Flash Gordon city,' but I wanted something more mechanical, and came up with something like the side of an aircraft carrier with all the openings for various purposes. I put a city on top of it that looked like it had ancient monuments and so forth, sort of a golden city. I painted a picture of that with gray clouds and I liked that pretty well. [Alderaan] represented where the bad guys hung out—it was their main place. The palatial residents of the leaders, but it turned out that it just wasn't possible to keep it in the script because they had too many places to go. They just had to edit out some locations." MCQUARRIE



6

Thumbnail sketch, Imperial City

4 Concept model by Colin Cantwell, TIE fighter

3 Preliminary illustration with foreground acetate overlay (from transparency), "Imperial City, Alderaan—city floats in gray clouds"

[illegible]

4 Preliminary illustration, "Imperial City, Alderaan—city floats in gray clouds"

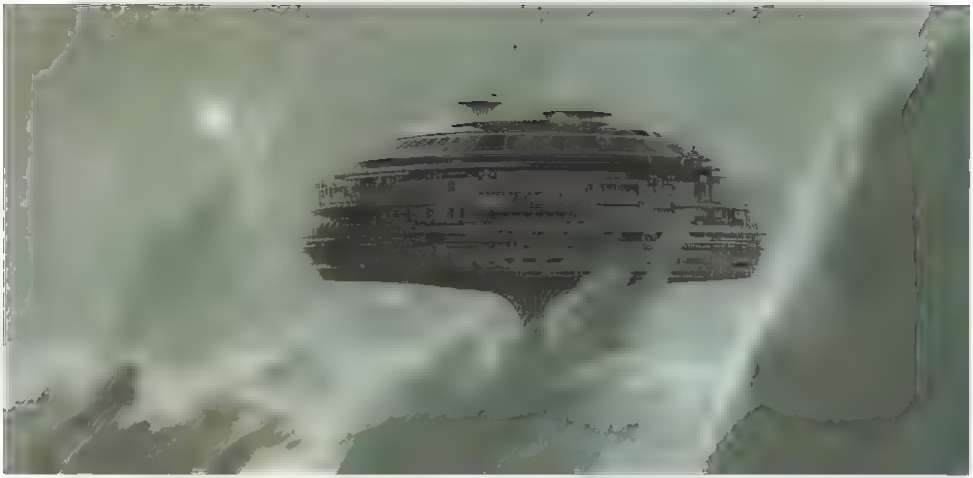
5 Thumbnail sketch for production illustration, "Imperial City, Alderaan—city floats in gray clouds"

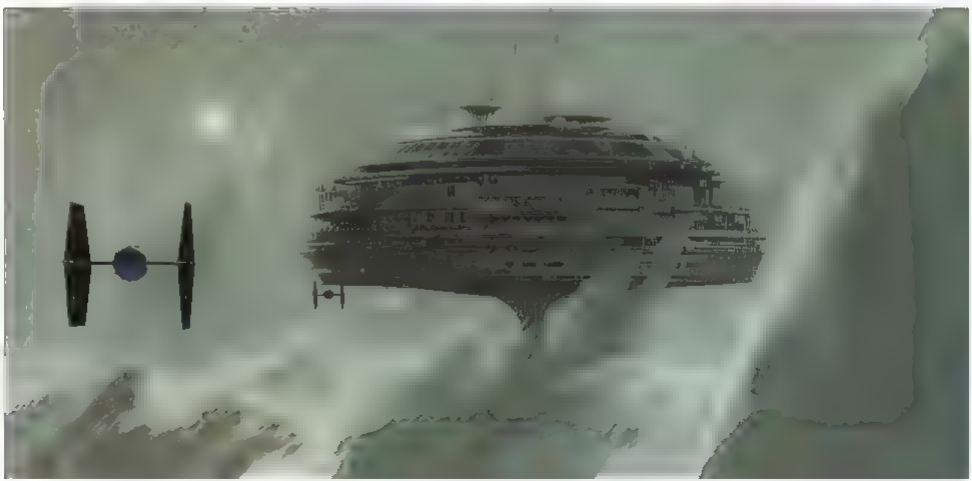
5 Production illustration, "Imperial City, Alderaan—city floats in gray clouds," version 1, February 20, 1975

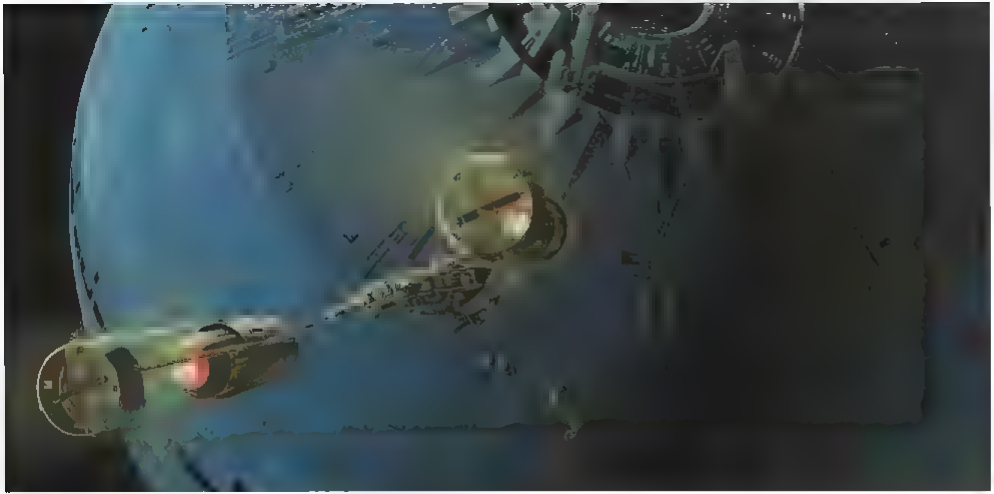
"An Imperial [illegible] Alderaan was one of [illegible] but we used [illegible] Cantwell's design in a floating city we [illegible] in The Empire Strikes Back

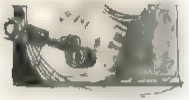
7 Production illustration, "Imperial City, Alderaan—city floats in gray clouds," version 2

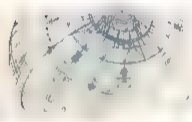
[illegible] Cantwell's TIE fighter [illegible]

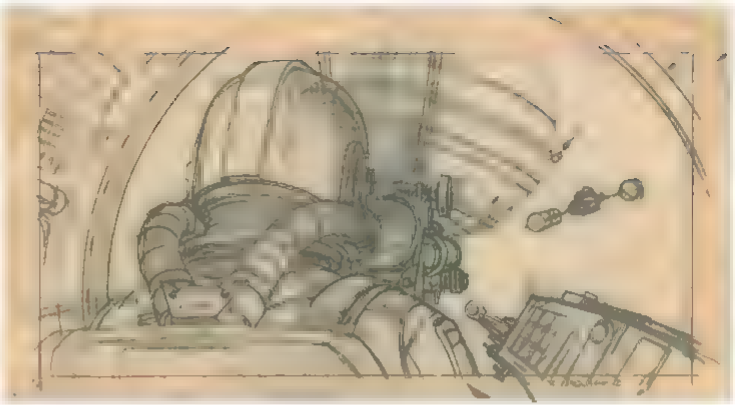












REPAINTS

AS DESIGNS WERE UPDATED during the pre-production development of *Star Wars*, McQuarrie updated his illustrations, too, to reflect the changes. For several of the paintings the artist is known to have heavily repainted his original works, to alter the elements or make other major changes. While the lack of reverence for the original pieces may seem surprising today, it made perfect sense at the time. "We were counting every penny back then, and we didn't feel like we needed to keep the old paintings, because they were wrong as far as we were concerned," says Kurtz. "We wouldn't use them for anything so there was no reason to keep them. It was certainly before we had any thought of archiving or preserving anything. There was no reason to file any of the old stuff—it was just easier to paint over them, because everything else in the painting was fine."

For his part, McQuarrie often preferred repainting elements to starting over, as he was happy with what he had already done. For the illustration of the pirate ship in the Mos Eisley docking bay (see page 108 [4]), McQuarrie felt that he had captured the characters in the painting perfectly and would not be able to re-create them as well on a second try. He therefore painted over the original pirate ship with the new "flying porkburger" *Falcon* design, taking great care to not disturb the figures set against the ship. "Why would Ralph need to do a new one," asks effects illustrator and designer Joe Johnston. "Old masters did it all the time. He spent a lot of time on the paintings, and why redo the entire thing if it wasn't necessary? He was doing them for a purpose."

In some instances, such as the Imperial City docking bay painting (see page 70 [2–4]), McQuarrie did a completely new painting rather than paint over the originals. But several paintings had elements painted again and again. For the painting of the droids on Tatooine, at least three versions of C-3PO's head are known to exist. Presumably Lucas requested minor alterations to the illustrations and McQuarrie obliged. These repaints were likely done quickly over a short span of time, while other pieces were reworked months after they were first completed to incorporate the latest designs.

"Ralph worked almost exclusively in Cel-Vinyl paint—the same paint that cel animators used," says Johnston. "He preferred it because it's extremely opaque, which means that Ralph could cover other colors with a very thin layer of paint, even when using an airbrush. This meant that there was virtually no paint buildup on his paintings, which made it easy to paint over something without seeing the texture or shape of the painting underneath."

The various versions of the paintings were captured for posterity unintentionally when photographs were shot at ILM to be reproduced for crew working on the film. All of the known painting variations are printed in this book, though it is always possible there were alternate versions that were never photographed.

"I put fighters in this painting [4] first, and I had a much smaller Death Star. The targeting computer was just a dream of mine, which meant having some sort of sight or reference material in front of the pilot that showed what was behind him, because he didn't have rearview mirrors." **MCQUARRIE**

1, 2 **Concept sketches for TIE fighter cross-section and production illustration, TIE fighter pilot**

Drawing for production illustration, TIE fighter pilot

3 **Production illustration, TIE fighter pilot, early Y-wing and Death Star designs, version 1, circa Spring 1975**

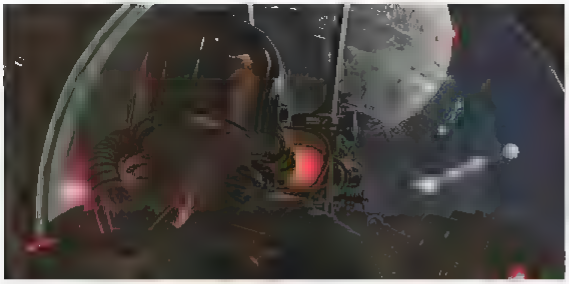
[illegible] this illustration featured Colin Cantwell's Y-wing model and an early version of the Death Star, as seen in "Battle for Death Star (fighter view on sphere)" (see pages 44–45 [4])

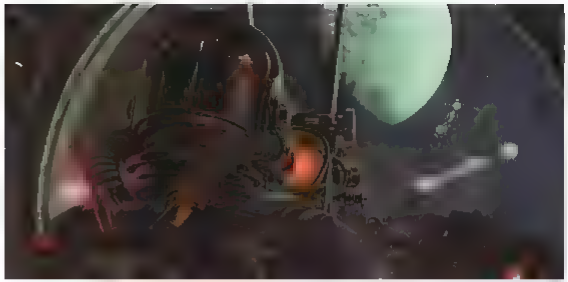
Production illustration, TIE fighter pilot, updated Y-wing and fourth moon of Yavin in place of the Death Star, version 2, circa Fall 1975

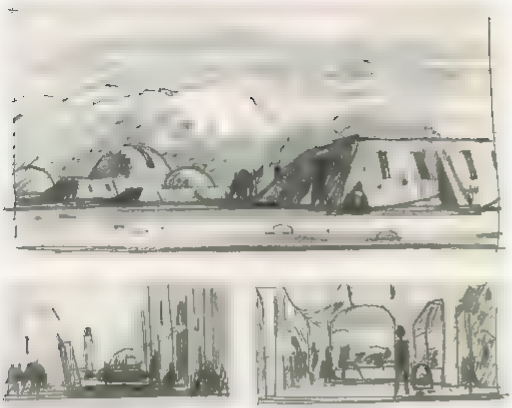
[illegible] the original work, updating the Death [illegible] fourth moon of Yavin in reverse (the orientation of the painting [with the TIE fighter flying away from the Death Star] and updating the Y-wing to remove the radar [illegible]

Production illustration, TIE fighter pilot, with the *Millennium Falcon* and revised Death Star design, version 3, circa early 1978

[illegible] was revised upon with the return of the Death Star, which had evolved closer to the design that appeared in the film, and the introduction of the Millennium Falcon (the "flying porkburger" update to the original pirate ship was done in December 1975). McQuarrie's repaints were sometimes done quickly after [illegible] such later to incorporate updated designs.







"The point of the Cantina scene was setting up a certain convention for a certain kind of movie. It's like suddenly walking into a monster movie—that shock of setting up that certain parameter and embracing it. What makes the scene work in a big way is the fact that up to that point it's a film about humans, and there's never any hint of monsters in the film. When they walk into the Cantina they walk into a completely different movie, and that's what makes it funny. It's also a play on the old joke of walking into the saloon and having all of these nefarious characters, only it's carrying that to the ultimate degree. I wanted the Cantina to have a 1930s influence. Essentially, I said I wanted it to be a round bar and I said I wanted it to have a lot of alcoves around the side and I wanted a big shaft of light coming down in the center." LUCAS

1 Thumbnail sketches, Cantina exterior and Mos Eisley streets

The second draft screenplay, completed January 28, 1976, describes the Cantina as a "blockhouse."

2 Concept or thumbnail sketches for production illustration, "Cantina"

3 Sketches for production illustration, Luke in "Cantina"

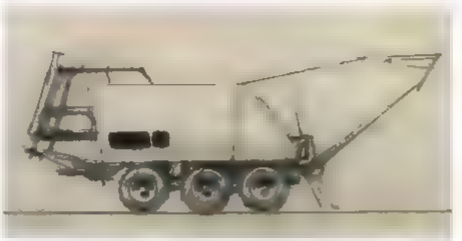
Lucas and McQuarrie drew inspiration from early Flash Gordon comics, such as this headpiece.

4–7 Sketches for production illustration, "Cantina"

The "Cantina" illustration was originally conceived without the inclusion of the stormtroopers, the seated bald, one-piece alien robot at right, or the breath mask in the seated pilot in the foreground. In the script, stormtroopers are not present in the Cantina until the fourth draft (January 1976).

1

3



2

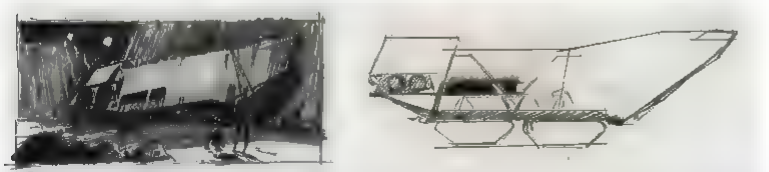
The sandcrawler was supposed to be a very large, old rusty vehicle. You had to climb up all the stairs to get in, and there were a lot of rooms and storage places and a big junk collector operation. I liked the profile of the very first sketch of the sandcrawler I did. I put it up against the cliffs because in the scripts at that time the sandcrawler was supposed to be damaged. That's why it was stalled there. Probably hit some rocks, which knocked the track off.

"I envisioned this thing on the front with all the teeth to be part of some kind of scoop that comes down with this hydraulic arrangement to pick up things, kind of like a garbage truck. Ultimately, George came up with a nifty idea of having that big magnet thing come down." McQUARRIE

"The sandcrawler is mostly Ralph's design." LUCAS

"Ralph had done a painting of the sandcrawler and it looked familiar to the final design except it was real long and kind of streamlined, and I thought that it should've been kind of high and awkward and rustier, kind of clumsy looking, so that influenced my redesign." JOHNSTON

4



5

Thumbnail and concept sketches, sandcrawler, sandcrawler interior, R2-D2, and game board (possibly an early holochess table)

2 Thumbnail and concept sketches, sandcrawler, droid escape and R2-D2

3, 4 Concept sketches, sandcrawler

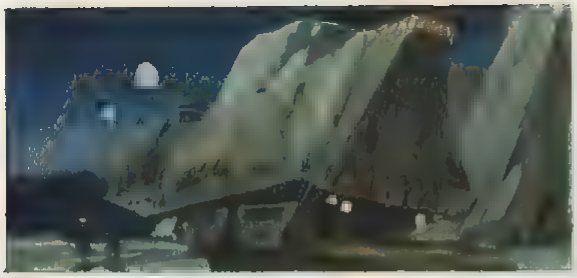
5 Thumbnail sketches, sandcrawler droid escape

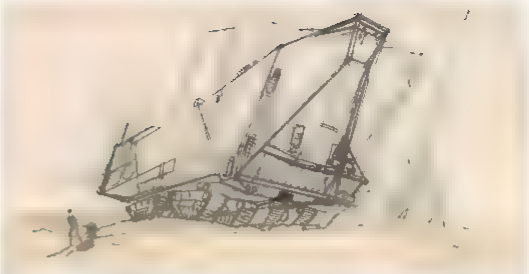
6 Preliminary illustration, sandcrawler droid escape

7 Drawing for production illustration, sandcrawler droid escape

8 Production illustration, sandcrawler droid escape, April 5, 1975

The sandcrawler design was inspired by real-world vehicles built by NASA in the 1960s to transport space-craft. The massive transporters, called crawler-transporters, weighed in at 6 million pounds





"The story kept changing considerably, and that's why some of the early paintings look a bit strange in retrospect. In the second group of paintings Ralph did there was one with stormtroopers in the hallway confronting the group, and you see a Chewbacca-like character that doesn't look anything like he ended up looking." KURTZ

"George is a very quiet person who comes in and says very little. He would suggest a few things, like for the stormtroopers he said, 'I want them to be in spooky white space armor.' That was the total instruction for that. Since they were totally obedient, without any feelings, they were better off being these people without expression. I tried to use patches to distinguish the officers from the men. I had originally designed the officers' helmet a somewhat different shape from the troopers'. The trooper helmet had a metal-colored top and a little more symmetrical look to it [1]. The officers' helmet was formed like a skull. I had a pretty clear idea of how the stormtrooper helmets should be made, and they didn't come out this way, but the general effect was pretty good. It suggested teeth too strongly, and I didn't want it to be that strong. I wanted it to be more just part of a machine, you know. That's why I would have loved to have done some of these things myself or have been over in the UK." MCQUARRIE

"Ralph said that when he first started working with George, he was designing specific shots in the movie—for instance, a low camera angle of a stormtrooper who had been killed, with his helmet big in the foreground—Darth Vader in the background [6]. George stepped in and said, 'I'll decide where the camera goes later. I want you to create the look of the world with me.' Ralph said he learned to work with George by designing what you would see, not exactly how you were going to see it, shot by shot." CRAIG BARRON

MATTE PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

1 **Concept sketch, Chewbacca**
The initial concept for Chewbacca was a lemur-like character (see page 86 [1, 3]).

Concept sketches, Chewbacca head

4 **Concept sketches (photocopy), storm-trooper helmets**
The red "59" and "60" numbers beside each of the helmet sketches were added by McQuarrie in the years after production, when assembling reference notes on the sketches for these instances. Simply "helmet Imperial stormtrooper".

5 **Concept sketches, stormtrooper helmets**

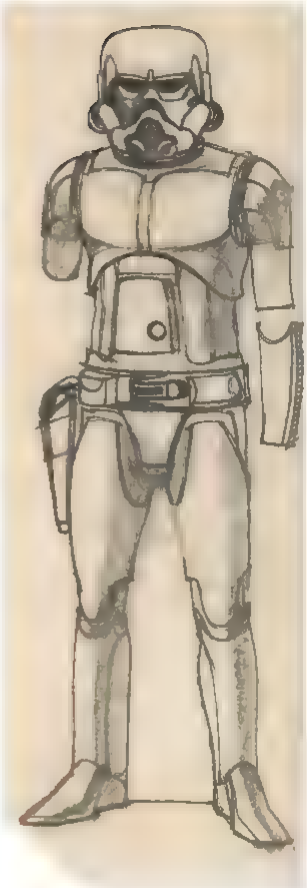
6 **Concept sketch, Vader is revealed behind a dead (or dying) stormtrooper**

Concept sketch, stormtrooper

1

A

B



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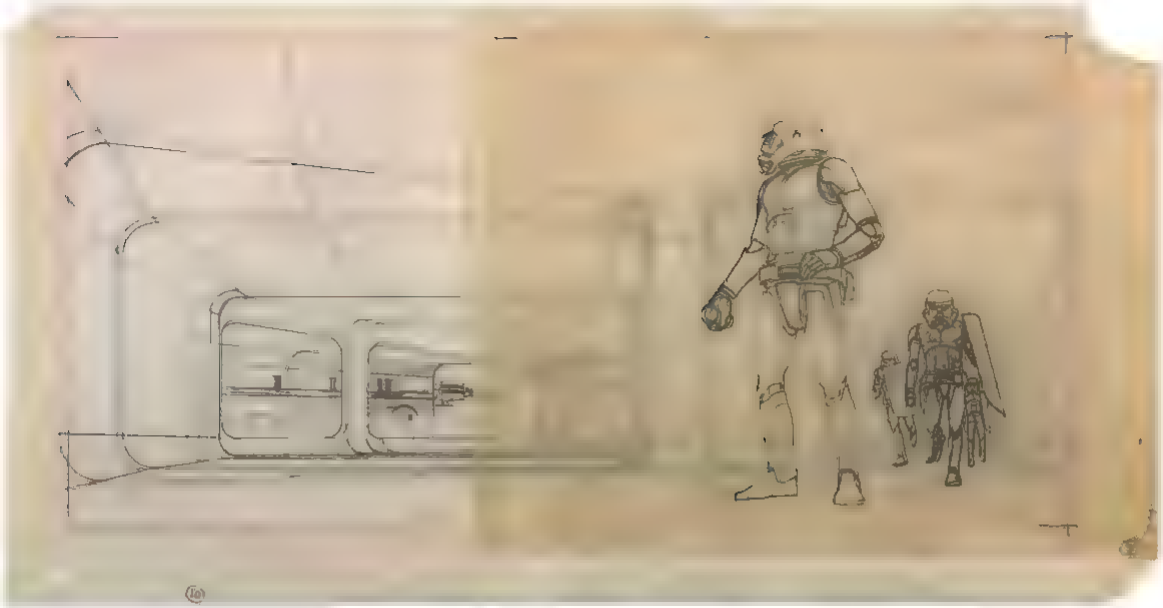
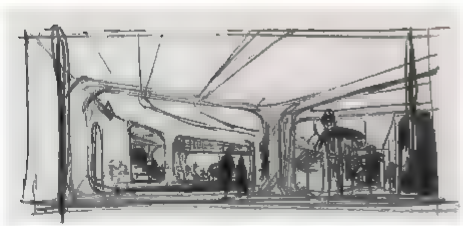


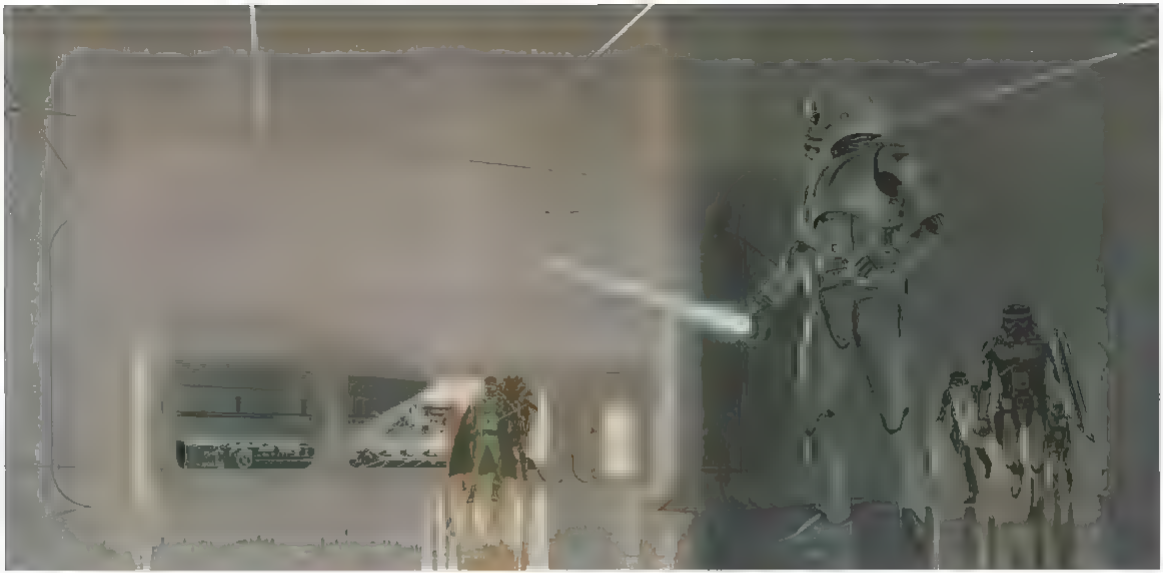


"This was about the little group of fugitives trying to escape, and there was about to be a confrontation. Ben is not there, Chewbacca is supposed to be carrying [Death Star]killer there, and I think that's Han Solo in the blue outfit with the cape and that's probably Luke in the background. I was thinking of the look for these hallways, to have these little thin slots which represented some sort of light pipe that came out. The slot was small enough that the light would radiate out at 360 degrees. It would be more of an indirect lighting, but from certain points of view you would see the slot. It would take an awful lot of light to actually do that. We're probably talking about some sort of unlimited power source, some incredible energy source that's really key to the universe, a problem that has been solved by these people." McQUARRIE

Drawings for production illustration, "Imperial troopers in Death Star corridor"

‹ Thumbnail sketch for production illustration (photocopy), "Imperial troopers in Death Star corridor"

› Production illustration, "Imperial troopers in Death Star corridor," March 28, 1975
The stormtroopers are depicted here with laser swords and shields, as described in the second draft screenplay by Lucas.



3

"[George] would get excited about *Star Wars*, telling me the story and showing me Ralph McQuarrie's concept paintings, which were phenomenal, but in the next breath he would be putting down its commercial chances."

STEVEN SPIELBERG, DIRECTOR, *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND*

"As a kid I pored over any information about how *Star Wars* had been made. One of the names that kept coming up was Ralph McQuarrie. When I first saw his incredible images, I was struck by the differences between what he had painted and the finished film—but as I gained more of an understanding of the role of a concept artist, I was more and more fascinated by the evolutionary process hinted at in the work. What seven-year-old *Star Wars* fan can ignore the image of a stormtrooper holding a lightsaber?"

CHRISTOPHER NOLAN, DIRECTOR, *INTERSTELLAR*

FROM THE SECOND DRAFT, JANUARY 1975

The two boys rush down the hallway, followed by the lumbering Chewbacca carrying Deak. They round a corner and run smack dab into twelve Imperial stormtroopers heading toward them. Both groups are taken by surprise and stop in their tracks. Before even thinking, Han draws his laser sword and charges the troops, yelling at the top of his lungs. The troops are startled by this assault and start to back off. Han manages to cut several down before the rest flee in panic. Pleased with his prowess, Han starts after them, yelling back to Luke as he goes.

HAN
Get Chewbacca to the ship!

LUKE
Wait, where are you going? Come back here.

Han has already rounded a corner and does not hear. Luke rushes Chewbacca to the doorway at the end of the hallway. He motions the Wookiee to go on.

INT. SPACEPORT - SUB-HALLWAY

Han chases the ten stormtroopers down a long sub-hallway. He is yelling and brandishing his laser sword. The troops reach a dead end and are forced to turn and fight. Han stops a few feet from them and assumes a defensive position. He is ready to cut them down. The troops begin to ignite their laser swords; when all ten troopers are moving into an attack position in front of the lone starpirate, Han's determined look begins to fade as the troops begin to advance.

"We didn't feel we had to polish our props as much as 2001 did because we were going to have a very fast moving picture and objects weren't going to be on screen as long, or used throughout the whole picture as they were in 2001.

"I had some ideas for weapons, but really the guys in England were doing a wonderful job of just finding parts and putting them on existing weapons so that they could use the mechanism to fire a cartridge that could make a flash." **McQUARRIE**

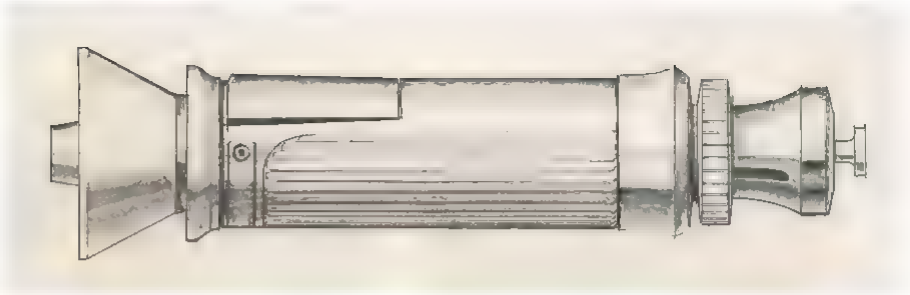
3 Concept sketches, blaster

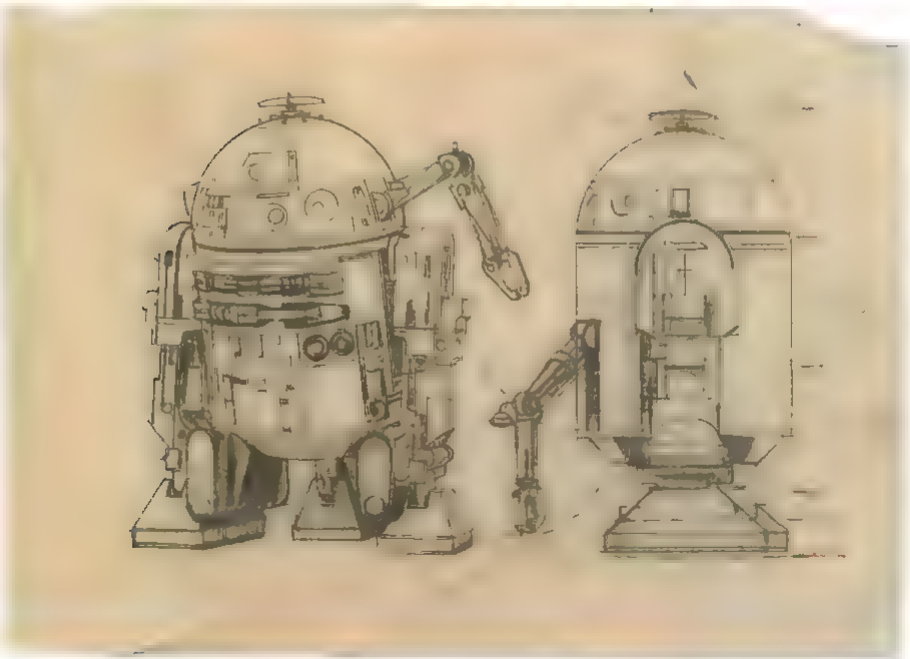
4 Concept sketches (photocopy), blaster rifle

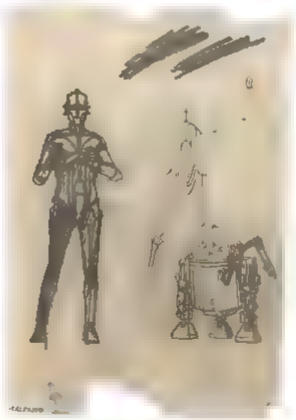
5 Concept sketches, blasters and rifles

6 Concept sketch, lightsaber

9 Drawings, R2-D2
Their late drawings were done to work out the proportions of the finished







"This [7] was simply an atmosphere sketch that could be sort of a symbol for the film, kind of like a logo. It would be a one-sheet poster and depict the five main characters as the heroes. That was Han Solo [left] and that was Luke [second to left] when he was a girl. George sort of liked this Chewbacca, but he thought it could be a little weirder, so he decided to take off the flak jacket. He took off all the clothes." **McQUARRIE**

"That painting is so beautiful. It's incredibly simple. Ralph used a lot of Prismacolor. Prismacolor is wax-based pencil and if you put that on top of the gouache, it blends perfectly. So for the most part the paintings that he did were basically flat colors and then he shaded it with pencil. Over the years he would get rid of the pencil and it was all gouache." **NILO RODIS-JAMERO** ASSISTANT VISUAL EFFECTS ART DIRECTOR *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK*

Drawing for illustration, "Fantastic 5"

Concept and composition sketches for illustration, "Fantastic 5"

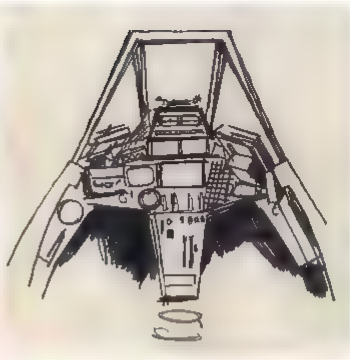
8 Revised drawing for illustration, "Fantastic 5"

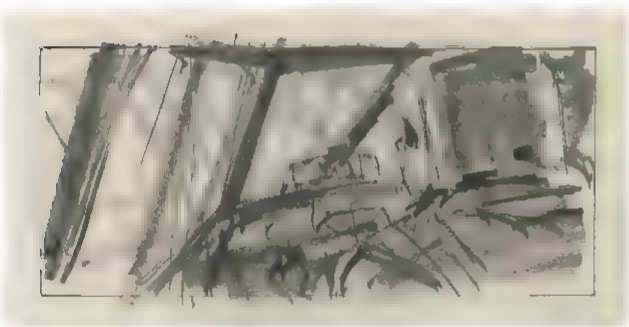
6 Concept sketch for illustration, "Fantastic 5"

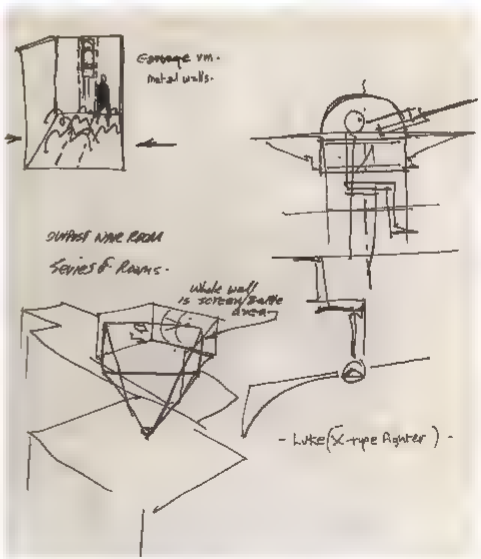
5–6 Drawing for illustration, "Fantastic 5"
While the dog was never developed in a screenplay between the lesson and this draft, [...] experimented with the concept of Luke as a female character rather than a male several McQuarrie illustrations and sketches depict Luke as a female.

7 Poster illustration, "Fantastic Five," April 3, 1975
As to what Han, Luke, Chewbacca, C-3PO and R2-D2 [...] the most attractive creature during the period between the second lesson, 1975, and third draft, [...] drafts [were] considered making Luke a girl. The original warning title [...] suggests a blending of the period we're [in] now. Here we have the new wave [...] romanticizing [...] into the film. Although intended as a possible marketing piece, this artwork was never [used] for any posters. The [...] did appear on the cover of a 1977 Mediascene magazine announcing the film and was revealed in 'The Art of Star Wars.'

7






Carnage vm.
metal walls.
SUPPORT WING ROOM
Series of Rooms.
whole wall
is screen/battle
droid
- Luke (X-type fighter) -

FROM THE SECOND DRAFT JANUARY 1975

EXT FOURTH MOON OF YAVIN REBEL OUTPOST

Luke Han, Chewbacca the robots and Rebel rangers ride on top of a low, flat transport speeder. They stand just in front of gleaming spacefighters at the edge of the vast jungle runway. The planes, different types of two-man fighter craft, have a wide variety of markings. Several of the ships have lasers and go through pre-flight procedures, as the large deflector fins, which protect the craft's huge and grotesque engines, while others create beautiful and ornate patterns. Ground crew run about preparing the craft. Activity as at a fever pitch as Luke, Han and Artoo disembark the speeder and enter a low metal building to one side of the runway.

"My original idea was to have an exterior flying field, with spacecraft flying around the fighter planes in the background, you would see the big planet." McQUARRIE

"McQuarrie's work feels like it has a lushness and a realness to it. Lucas feels like a template as opposed to an illustration. It's there to show the way as opposed to sell a product. What McQuarrie did did not sell the product. It showed the people who were trying to make the product how to make the product valuable. The chosen point of view of the emplacement such that there's an implication of a world existing beyond the four corners of the frame." HOWARD CHAYKIN ART ST OF THE FIRST STAR WARS POSTER, 1976.

1 Concept sketch, X-wing cockpit exterior

2 Concept sketch, X-wing cockpit interior

3 Thumbnail sketch, X-wing pilot in cockpit

4 Concept sketch, X-wings outside of rebel hangar

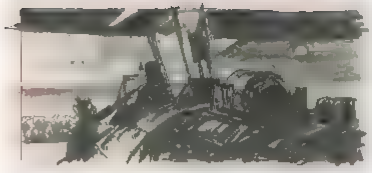
5 Sketches, X-wing turret, garbage compactor room, and outfits, Wat Tambor

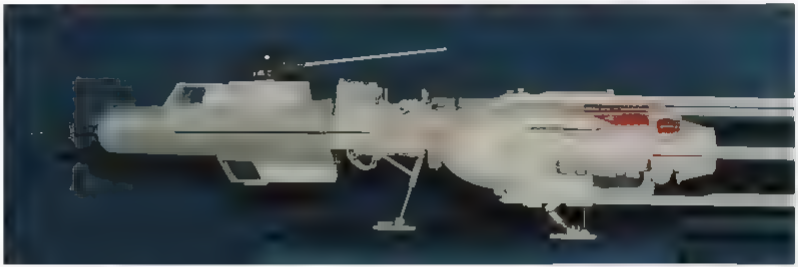
6, 7 Thumbnail sketches, X-wings in hangar

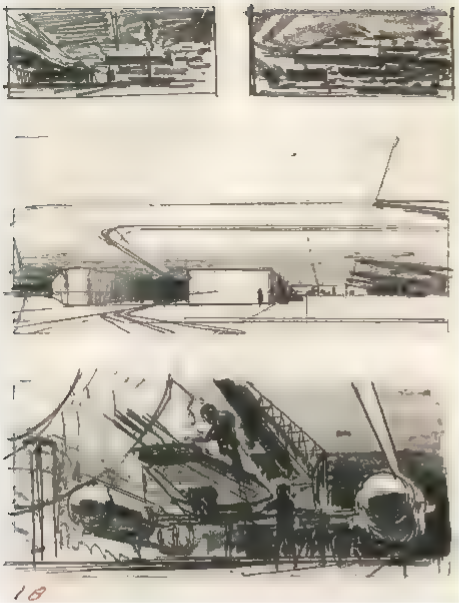
8 Concept model by Colin Cantwell, X-wing fighter

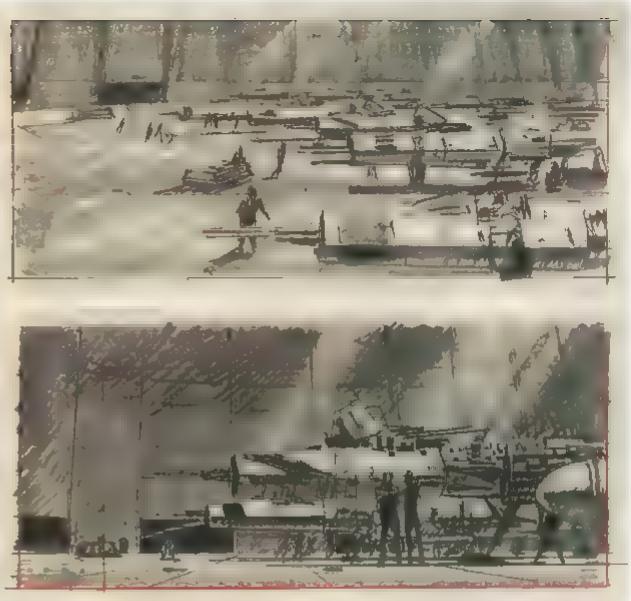
9 Production illustration, "Rebel spacebase fighters on fourth moon, outside temple hideout," April 3, 1975

10 Detail from production illustration, "Rebel spacebase fighters on fourth moon, outside temple hideout," April 3, 1975









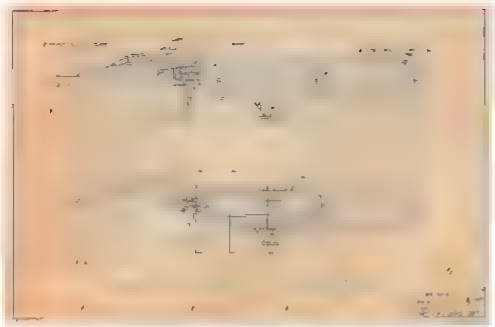
"There's an X-wing over here [s] with its wings folded and Y-wings that are being unplugged from their ground system, and I took a Navy pilot that was running across the flight deck from a World War II photograph. He had a clipboard and I did the same gesture, and I changed the uniform and put a helmet on him. I envisioned them as having a helmet which would be capable of life support if their ship was damaged. It would be something like an oxygen mask but it would cover the whole head. It might come on automatically—there might be openings from the side where you could breathe in air from the cockpit—if something happened it would automatically snap shut and seal." MCQUARRIE

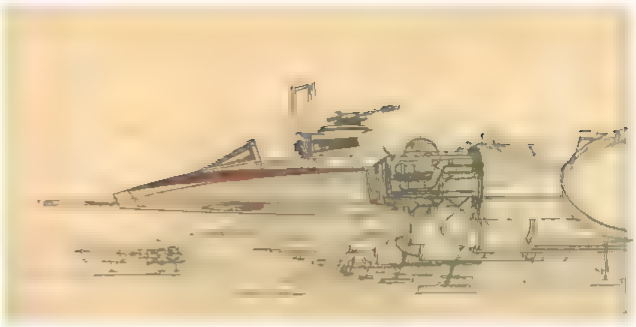
"When I started working at ILM my job was to make orthographic [ne drawings [s, of Joe Johnston's vehicle concepts for the model shop. I would draw the front and the top and so forth, and Joe was right there so he could make modifications. I gave Ralph several of the drawings, and he would come by and take pictures of the progress of the models. He did a painting of the side view of the Y-wing and it was the version I drew. It was like he took my line drawing and made it real. I couldn't get over how fantastic [was." STEVE GAWLEY MODEL BUILDER

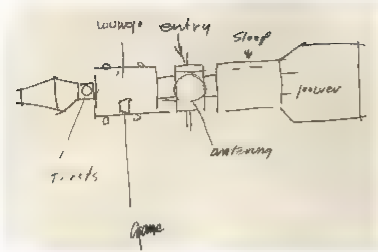
Thumbnail sketches (photocopy), Y-wings in hangar

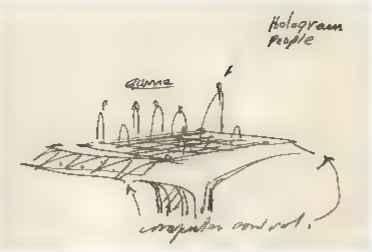
- Thumbnail sketches, Y-wings in hangar
- 3 Orthographic drawing by Steve Gawley, Y-wing fighter [illegible]
- Drawing for production illustration, Y-wings in indoor rebel hangar
- 5 Production illustration, Y-wings in indoor rebel hangar, January 1976/early 1976

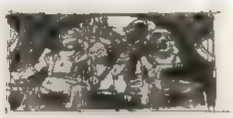
A direction had been established [illegible] with a wide-screen composition. This led to McQuarrie's [illegible] completely new version of the Rebel spaceship illustration [see page 62 top], incorporating the new setting and the latest designs from ILM's art department which began in August 1975. [illegible] McQuarrie also added an extreme foreground ship (seen at top of painting) to the composition for [illegible]

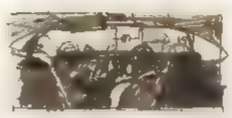












Smaller - like B-52

Cockpit - pirate starship
Being towed toward Imperial
City of Alderaan

Sketch, pirate ship layout and hologram game on pirate ship

Thumbnail sketches, cockpit and gunport as pirate ship taken into Imperial City of Alderaan

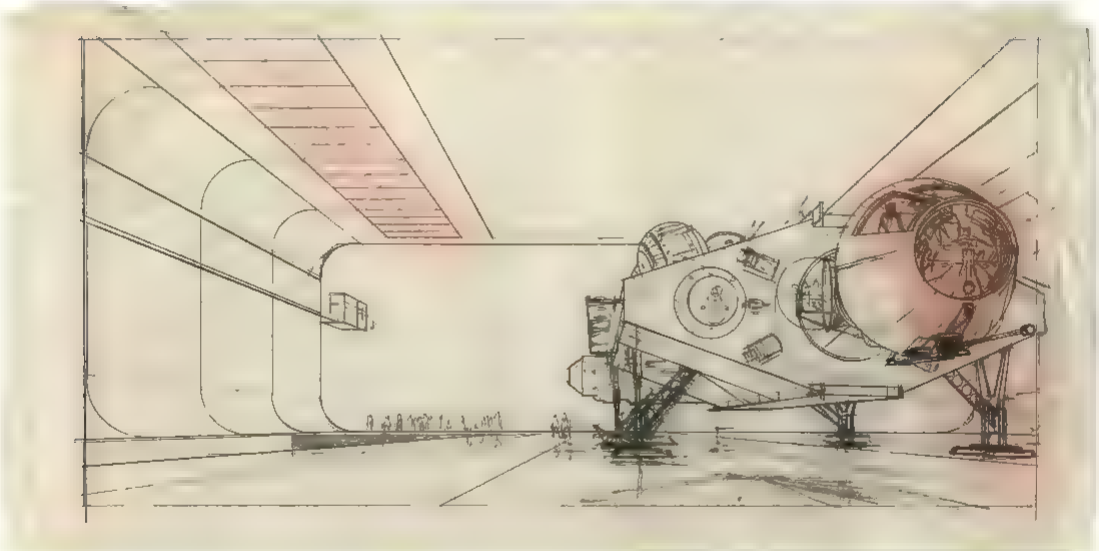
Thumbnail sketches, pirate ship escorted into Alderaan hangar by Imperial fighters

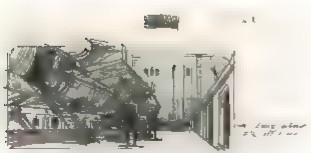
Photograph of C. John Cantwell's pirate ship model

Drawing for product-line illustration, "Docking Bay"

5 Thumbnail sketches, pirate ship at Alderaan

6 Thumbnail sketches, pirate ship at Imperial City





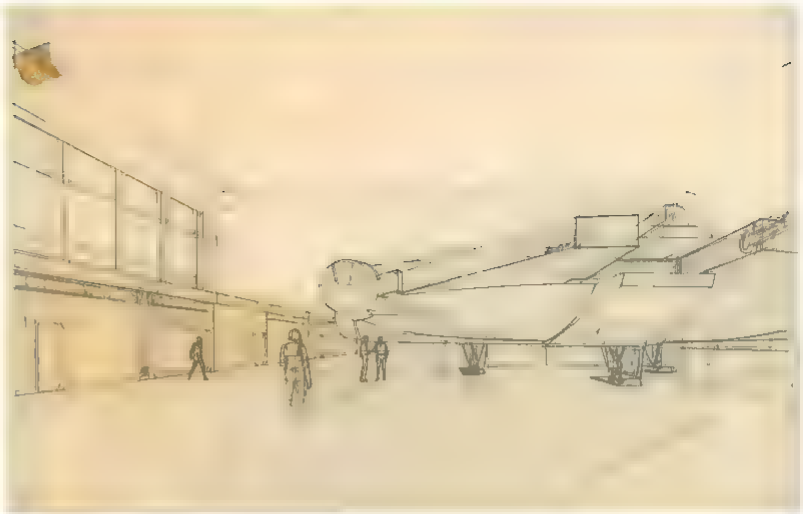
FROM THE SECOND DRAFT, JANUARY 1975

1ST MAIN FORWARD BAY - SPACEPORT
IMPERIAL CITY OF ALDERAAN

The pirate starship rests in a huge hangar bay which dwarfs the Corellian craft. Hundreds of troops work their way toward the craft under the cover of reflective shields. A battalion commander and two guards edge their way toward the main hatch.

"This was supposed to be looking out into the clouds and haze. This was like a big hangar where research work was done. They'd right in anything, like this strange ship to work in, though. And there did right back in these windows, part of the big shops and the marble shops and everything it took to repair them.

This painting was a response to what came back from England. George told me that they're going to put a big sight in here so it's more all from behind." McQUARRIE



Production illustration, "Docking Bay" version 1, circa March 31, 1975

McQuarrie's first concept for the interior of the docking bay where the pirate ship would land. A space vehicle, which McQuarrie would later redesign as the Millennium Falcon, is visible in the background.

Production illustration, "Docking Bay, with revised pirate ship design, version 2"

McQuarrie's second concept for the interior of the docking bay, showing the pirate ship with a Millennium Falcon–like design in the background. The ship's hangar and docking ship were also redesigned.

Drawing for production illustration, the *Millennium Falcon* in Death Star docking bay

Production illustration *Millennium Falcon* in Death Star docking bay, circa early 1976

As originally conceived in the Death Star docking bay, the Millennium Falcon was a sleek, streamlined vehicle with a cockpit that resembled a bird's head. The Falcon's design was changed significantly over the course of production, and the Falcon that appears in the finished film is much bulkier and more boxlike. Despite the changes, the Falcon remains a fan favorite, and McQuarrie's concept illustrations of the ship are among his most widely reproduced work.

"At one point, I was going to have a girl at the center of the story. Luke Skywalker might never have been; he might have been a heroine. Leia came out of Luke, so to speak, just as Han did, as the opposite of Luke." LUCAS

"The landspeeder was the first introduction of the nonscientific aspects of the *Star Wars* saga. I threw science out the window and went into a fairy-tale land where anything was possible. The landspeeder is a vehicle that floats without any real scientific basis. Ralph based the landspeeder on a lot of ideas and drawings and things I had seen. I wanted it to be a small, little stick thing. Especially since it was Luke's speeder." LUCAS

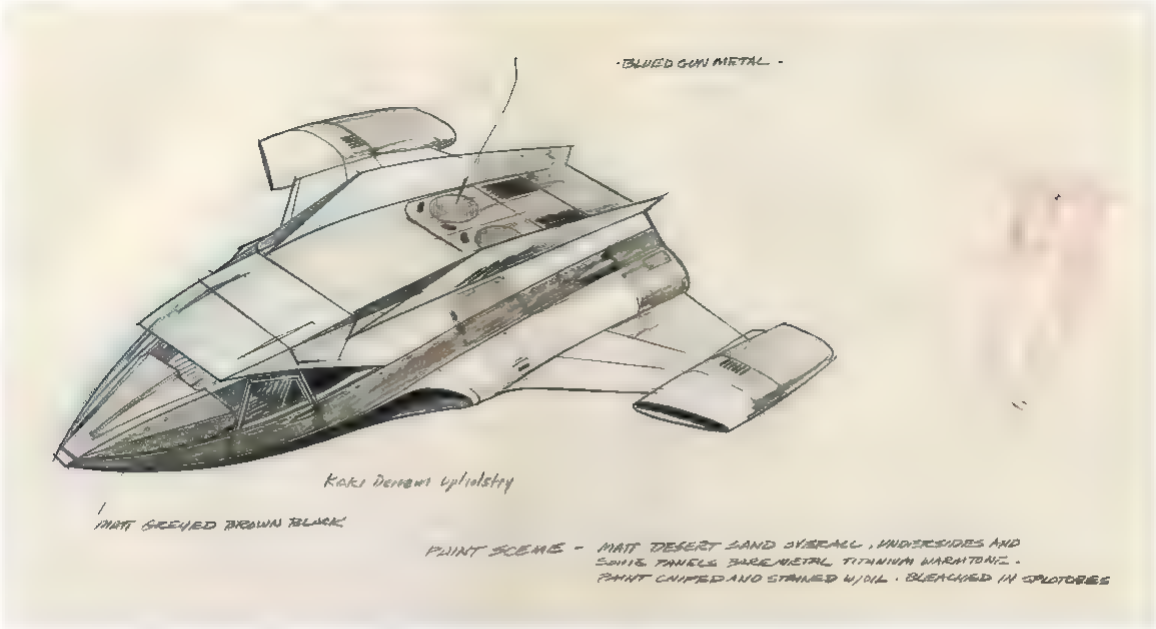
"We built mock-ups of the landspeeder [in the UK art department], trying to get the scale right based on Ralph's painting. We tried to analyze how Ralph had done it and how the scene would work, and we built three mock-ups in the end." ROGER CHRISTIAN, SET DECORATOR

2 Costume sketches, Luke as a female

3 Concept sketch, landspeeder
This sketch is a concept for the second landspeeder seen in Luke's garage.

4 Concept sketch, landspeeder

5 Concept sketch, Luke looking out on Mos Eisley


·BLUED GUN METAL ·
Kaki Drawn Upholstry
MATT GREYED BROWN BLACK
PAINT SCEME - MATT DESERT SAND OVERALL, UNDERSIDES AND SOME PANELS BARE METAL TITANIUM WARM TONE.
PAINT CHIPPED AND STAINED W/OIL · BLEACHED IN SPOTTERS

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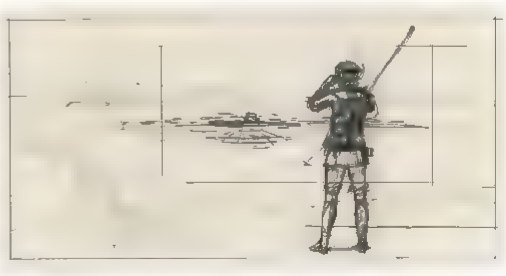

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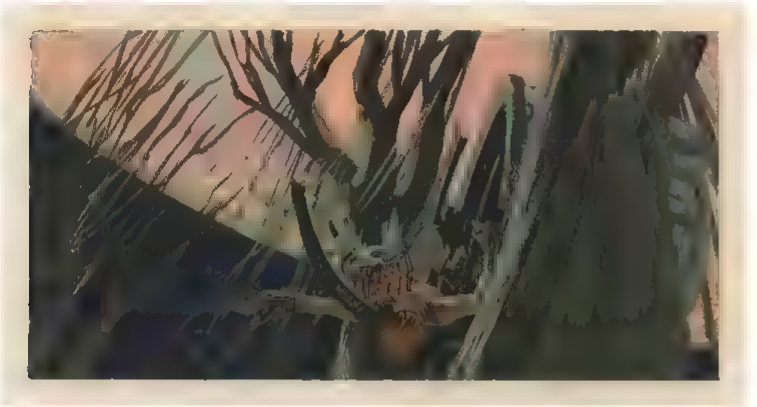


2

3

FROM THE SECOND DRAFT JANUARY 1975

VINE TANGLE: Luke & Lifepod is caught in the ramps of a huge tree. The fragile craft has been ripped in half by the crash landing. A glass-enclosed mummy case containing the wounded Desk Sergeant is securely strapped in what remains of the tiny lifepod. But his unconscious brother, Luke, hangs half out of the damaged craft. A two-foot high insect-like creature scoots down a branch and onto the back of the dormant warrior. The insect lets out a chirping hissing sound, and a slimy tube emerges from its hairy mouth, waking Luke. He opens his eyes, but doesn't move. He is immediately aware of the insect. Suddenly, with one quick blow, he knocks the creature against the side of the lifepod, and it is squashed, lifeless.

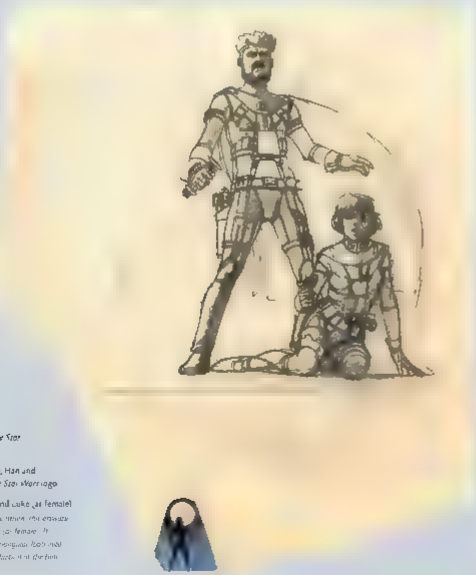
"The rebel stronghold was going to be a lush jungle. There was one scene that George liked, looking up into one of these trees with the planet up there overhead. George wanted to show the pod, with the boys in it, landing in this jungle. There was a giant insect and one of the boys was knocked out and hanging up in a tree." McQUARRIE

Thumbnail sketches, Luke's lifepod crash lands on the fourth moon of Yavin
These thumbnail sketches were among McQuarrie's earliest work on the film.

2 **Preliminary illustration: Luke is attacked by insect-like creature in tree**
In the second draft screenplay by Lucas, young Luke Skywalker was forced to jettison to the fourth moon of Yavin, not dissimilar to the giant jungle terrain made impossible to land Imperial starship. His lifepod crashed in a jungle and Luke awakened to find an insect-like creature moving in for the kill. He dispatched the creature quickly and regained consciousness. A second attempt en route to the Massassi outpost

3 **Sketch, Luke (as female) in tree**
This sketch depicts the female version of Luke that was conceived between the second and third drafts. McQuarrie placed Luke in the same costume seen in the Fenimore Fine illustration (see page 61).

THE STAR WARS LOGO



1, 2 Thumbnail sketches, *The Star Wars* logo

3 Drawing for illustration, Han and Luke (as female) for *The Star Wars* logo

4 Logo illustration: Han and Luke (as female) [illegible] for illustration, the artwork depicts Han and Luke (as female) in an interactive fo[illegible] Originally Han and Luke were shown as the film title logo. [illegible]

5

THE
STAR
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STAR WARS

"This logo [*sic*] was done as a symbol for the film, to go on film cans and letters. George had one for *American Graffiti* and wanted a logo for *Star Wars*. It was done while we were working on costumes. This was how we first pictured Han Solo. It could be a sort of Luke character but I think it's more like Han. Anyway, later, George decided that Han Solo should be a more relaxed character and his costume was changed. But this decal was designed before the change.

"My paintings are sort of 'art.' A real artist wakes up and does what he wants, instead of what the client wants, the agent wants, the gallery wants, etc. I consider myself a craftsman, a draftsman." MCQUARRIE

Thumbnail sketches, *The Star Wars* logo
The thumbnails with Jaggedy character panel from the Fantastic Five cartoon. See page 6.

4 **Thumbnail sketch, *The Star Wars* logo**

5 **Thumbnail sketch, *The Star Wars* logo**
The thumbnail numbered 5 is one of the "Star Wars" illustrations. See page 7.

6–8 **Concept sketches, *The Star Wars* logo**

9 **Concept sketches, Han Solo for *The Star Wars* logo**
The sketch shows a beautiful Han Solo, artistic, as pose free figure.

10 **Logo illustration, version 1, circa June 1975**
The Star Wars logo with Han Solo. The main illustration by McQuarrie was a heroic Han Solo with more elaborate costume than was used.

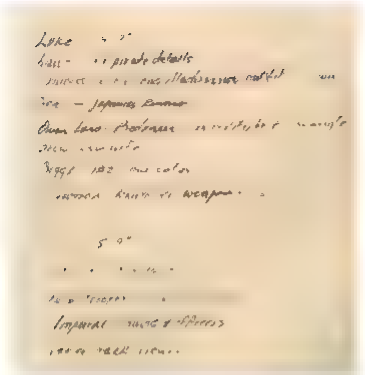
11 **Drawing for illustration, cake for *The Star Wars* logo**
Mr. Quarrie mentioned that using this as the logo figure, a drawing like this might be fattening. Even our food pictures represent the artist's preference in illustration by applying a cool, graphic rather than the realistic touch. The drawing was the graphic coming from the artist. This version has

12 **McQuarrie's triangular *The Star Wars* logo was produced as a sticker, which was subsequently affixed to much of the production crew's gear**

Logo illustration (from transparency), version 2, circa June 1975
The Star Wars logo with Luke, Vader, other characters in the logo is very similar to McQuarrie's piece. See the reference sketches on page 68. This version, applied to a T-shirt, was distributed to all cast and crew members.

13 **Logo illustration (from transparency), version 3**
The Star Wars logo with Luke, Vader, other characters. Johnston's version of the lettering was altered to a somewhat less readable but more

14 **Logo illustration, version 3**
The Star Wars logo with Luke and Darth Vader's logo lettering appears in many variations. The lettering on the logo was updated once again for a screen distributed to members of the Hollywood Chamber of



COSTUME DESIGN

COSTUME DESIGN WAS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL AREAS for which McQuarrie produced concept artwork, several months before John Mollo was hired onto the film as costume designer. Lucas asked McQuarrie to work on some of the character costumes in late July 1975, in anticipation of production designer John Barry's visit from the UK. Many costumes in *Star Wars* were more than traditional wardrobe, with characters frequently appearing in masks and helmets.

As with the production paintings, the director gave his illustrator loose descriptions of characters from which McQuarrie experimented and developed a number of different concepts. "I described the characters, but mostly it was Ralph that came up with the actual faces," Lucas recalls. The signature looks of Darth Vader, Chewbacca, the stormtroopers, and the heroes were cemented during this period.

Some of the costumes had already appeared in sketches and production illustrations, but a more complete vision of them was established through a series of sketches that bear Lucas's handwritten titles, likely added for the benefit of Barry and Mollo but also to say "these are approved." Lucas told McQuarrie, as he later told Mollo, that he didn't want any of the costumes to stand out. "I wanted something very amorphous and vague on the costumes. I wanted very ordinary fabric, so it would just sort of read as clothes," he said. "Ralph had a very strong influence in certain cases, like the stormtroopers and Darth Vader. Essentially they are his designs."

Lucas also sought to distinguish between the characters not only in terms of good against evil, but of the natural world versus the technological world. "I wanted the technological environments to be black and white. On Tatooine I wanted everything to be tan and brown, very organic. So the characters were sort of all color-coordinated with their environments. Since See-Threepio was the more human of the robots, we made him part of the human beings by making him gold. We put him on the human side, the earth side, the non-technical side. It was sort of an esoteric idea, but I liked it."

When Mollo started at Elstree Studios in January 1976, he was provided with a reference folder of McQuarrie's costume design sketches. Mollo worked from these illustrations to create the costumes in three dimensions. Costumes and components that featured rigid elements, such as the stormtroopers' armor or Darth Vader's helmet, were turned over to the art department, where they were overseen by John Barry, art director Norman Reynolds, and others. Mollo was also tasked with creating the looks of characters that had not been established in McQuarrie's sketches, such as the rebel troops and ground crew. Mollo went on to win the Academy Award® for Best Costume Design for his work on the film.

"Maybe I should have got a credit for the costumes, because I designed most of them," McQuarrie laughed. "I didn't have any hard feelings. John Mollo was a professional costume guy, and I understood what he had to do. He had designed costumes for films before, and I hadn't—I had no credits on films. I was proud to see the costumes get the Oscar."

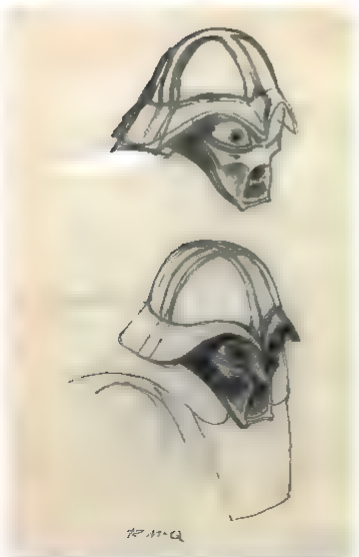
4 Character costume reference document
This list of notes was taken by McQuarrie during a meeting with Lucas in which he described the looks of key characters.

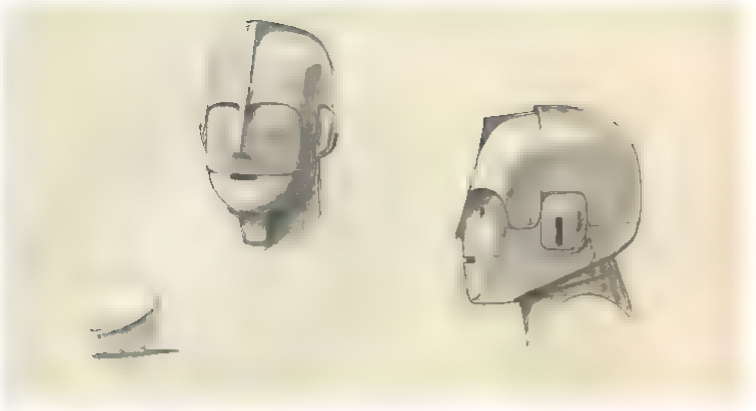
2 Concept sketches, Darth Vader helmets with Vader title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975
Lucas added titles to this series of costume designs to show that a design was approved, and to clarify the characters for other members of the production team. Many of the sketches with Lucas's titles applied were done specifically as costume designs in July or August 1975.

3 Concept sketches, Darth Vader helmet with Vader title by Lucas

4 Concept sketches, Darth Vader helmets
There is a horizontal tear in the paper before the upper helmet sketch.

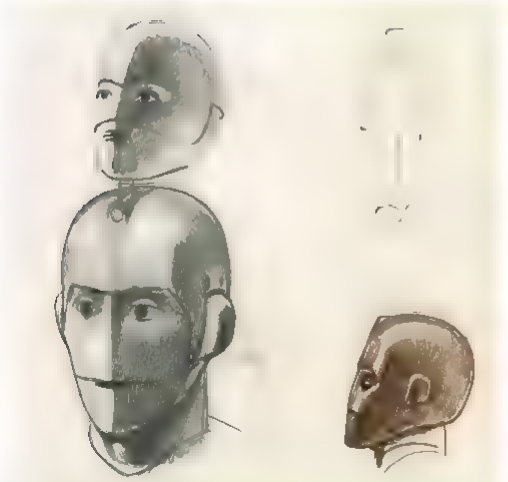
1 Costume sketch, Darth Vader with Vader title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975
Lucas added titles to this series of costume designs when a design was approved; for example, the helmet and his cloak [1, 5].

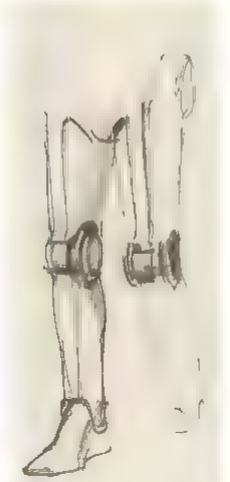




"[...]ot imagine Threepio being any other way than he was in the film. . had a certain amount to do with it but it was nothing compared to what the art department and the sculptress Liz Moore did and they actually made the costume." MCQUARRIE

"George was a person who seemed a lot like I was in a way, a very quiet sort of person and he doesn't get terribly excited about things. He didn't have a whole lot of time to spend with people for one thing, because he was very, very busy with a whole lot of loose ends. I think that's the way everybody else saw him too: a person who had ninety-three places to go that day. George had to keep this great mind of his ticking over on all the other things while he got the right idea across to you and communicated it in a very brief way so that things didn't bog down in a lot of arguing and talking on into far-out, wee hours of the morning. He was just locked into this big machine that was grinding forward on a hundred different levels, and he had to keep track of every one of them. He was the central brain that knew what the picture should be." MCQUARRIE





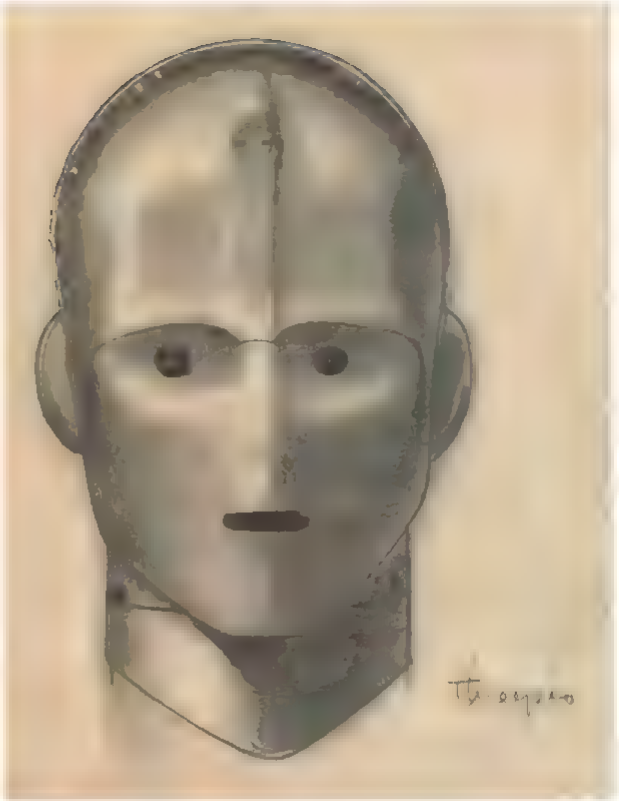
Concept sketches, C-3PO head
The eyes on the leftmost illustration have been notably altered—erased and redrawn, perhaps as part of a discussion with Lucas or John Barry.

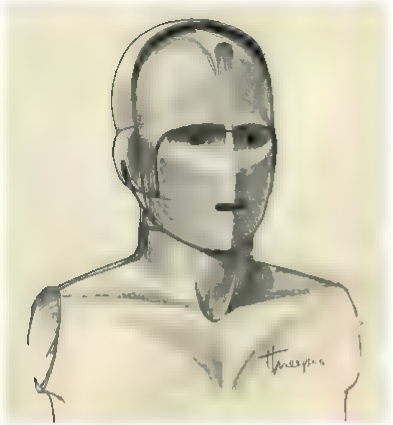
3 Concept sketches, C-3PO head and robot figure
An illustration features eyes that are even more human than [...] The tackle robot sketch bears a resemblance to Gort from The Day the Earth Stood Still

Concept sketch, C-3PO legs

4 Concept sketch, C-3PO head with round mouth (lower of two layers)

Concept sketch, C-3PO head with horizontal mouth (upper of two layers) with *Threepio* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975





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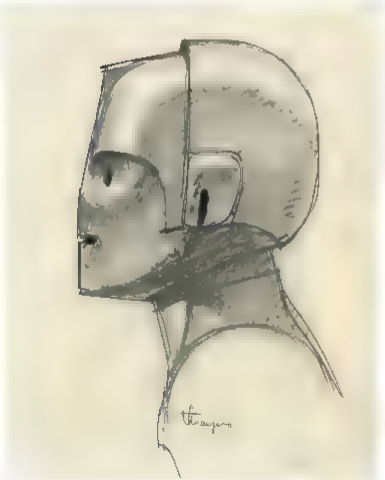

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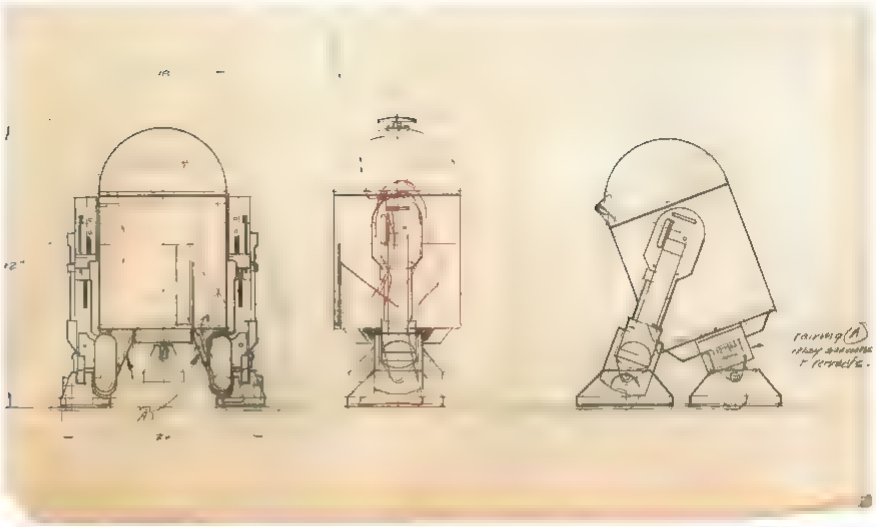
"Artoo-Detoo was a little different. I would have liked to see Artoo-Detoo be more like my drawing. It was a little shorter, a bit different, but he had to fit Kenny Baker, so that changed him." MCQUARRIE



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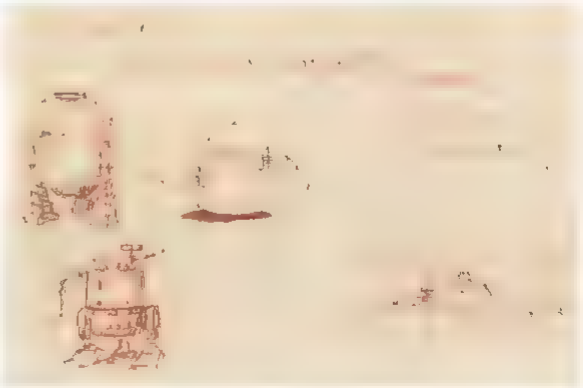

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1 Concept sketch, C-3PO bust with *Threepio* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

2 Concept sketch, C-3PO head profile with *Threepio* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

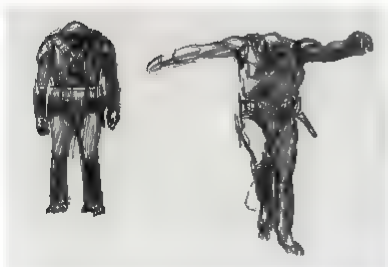
3 Concept sketch, C-3PO bust with *Threepio* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

4 Drawing, R2-D2 costume prop configurations

5 Kenny Baker test-fits the developing R2-D2 body.

6 Concept sketches, R2-D2, other R2 types and landspeeder perspective

The note at the top of the page is likely a reference book Lucas recommended to McQuarrie.



Chewbacca

FROM THE SECOND DRAFT, JANUARY 1975

Luke is standing next to HAN SOLO, a young Corellian pirate only a few years older than himself

"When we started out, George was looking for crafty, lemur eyes, true rubber teeth—a frightening visage. Then George found another [1970s] science-fiction illustration from a book or a magazine that showed a furry creature with kind of slit eyes and he had a lot of breasts down his chest, or her chest. We didn't know what gender this creature was George said, 'Put a bandolier on her, take the breasts off, and give her a weapon.' I think he was considering an army of villainous Wookiees at some point [*sic*], but eventually changed his mind until he got to the character on the screen, which was better looking and sympathetic—almost cute." MCQUARRIE

Chewbacca was inspired by Indiana, my Alaskan Husky. The dog sat on the front seat of a station wagon and looked like a copilot. That image fashioned the Wookiee, as well as the fact that Indiana was with me when I was writing the whole thing." LUCAS

"Chewbacca was a fascinating one, because he had to look nice, though he could be very ferocious when he wanted. I had seen a sketch by Ralph McQuarrie and I based it on that because it was very good, and it looked just right to me." STUART FREEBORN MAKE-UP SUPERVISOR

"...in my early sketches I had Solo looking very dapper. He had a laserword and some sort of Flash Gordon headpiece that went over his forehead [*sic*]. But George wanted him to be simpler, and he told me to just give him a vest, a shirt, trousers, and boots." MCQUARRIE

"Han Solo evolved from my wanting to have a cynical foil for the innocent Luke." LUCAS

Concept sketches (from transparency), Chewbacca and Han Solo (see page 54 for additional Chewbacca concepts)

Concept sketches (from transparency), Chewbacca

3 Concept sketch, Chewbacca with blaster rifle

4 Concept sketch, Chewbacca with rifle with *Chewbacca* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

5 n Concept sketches, pirate with *Pirate* title by Lucas
The sketch must represent Han Solo from the second draft, where he is frequently addressed as a pirate. As Lucas deliberately did not have the pirate 'look' in one may represent another pirate such as one of Jabba the Hutt's gang in the third draft

n Costume sketches Han Solo

6 n Costume sketches, Han Solo with *Han Solo* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975
An illustration of Han Solo before a desk. He is standing, his carriage with a slight resemblance to Napoleon. Han Solo is equipped with a cape, boots, vest, shirt, and trousers. Early version.

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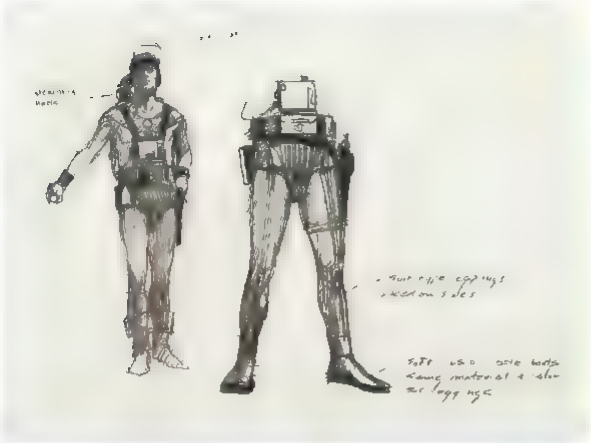

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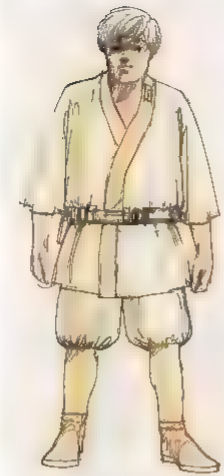

"…think George thought of simple costumes, which worked very well. Very easy to believe." MCQUARRIE

"I didn't want a costume to look like it was designed. I didn't want something very flashy in design; I wanted something very amorphous and vague on the costumes. I didn't want that metallic kind of fabric. I wanted very ordinary." LUCAS

1 Concept sketches, Luke as starfighter
This sketch shows Luke's space flight gear.

2 Costume sketch, Luke

3 4 Costume sketches, Luke with *Luke as Starfighter* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

5 Costume sketch (from transparency), Luke

6 Costume sketch, Luke

7 Costume sketch, Luke with *Luke Storm*, title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975
The form reference indicates the second Luke would wear the costume in. At this time, the character's full name was 'Luke Starkiller' – the name change to Skywalker did not take place until the fourth draft (January 1976).

A Costume sketch, Leia with *cane in beginning* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

"In beginning refers to Leia's opportunity to [illegible] before she was on [illegible] two [illegible] and her [illegible]

B Costume sketch (photocopy), Leia with *cane in beginning* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

C Costume sketch, Leia with blaster

D Costume sketch (from transparency), Leia

E Costume sketch, Leia

F Costume sketch, Leia with *cane after pirate* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

"An [illegible] to [illegible] pause [illegible] before [illegible]

"I wanted Leia to be rough, and I wanted her to be young. I didn't want to explore the fact that she was a girl. She could just as easily have been a prince rather than a princess, and so I wanted to concentrate on that. I didn't want to make her this sexy typical princess kind of thing where everybody was watching her shape more than they were listening to who she was." LUCAS

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"I wanted a character who was an old warrior, very stately—a father image for Luke. He evolved out of that. He wasn't meant to be Christ-like but rather a thoughtful and intelligent man with a noble bearing—a symbol of goodness and mystical power. At one point, Ben Kenobi was going to be Japanese and the princess was going to be Japanese." LUCAS

"We always talked about how the costuming of everybody should look as realistic as possible or be believable in the sense that it would be functional. We wanted to stay away from the *Star Trek* approach to science-fiction costuming, which is very esoteric and non-functional." KURTZ

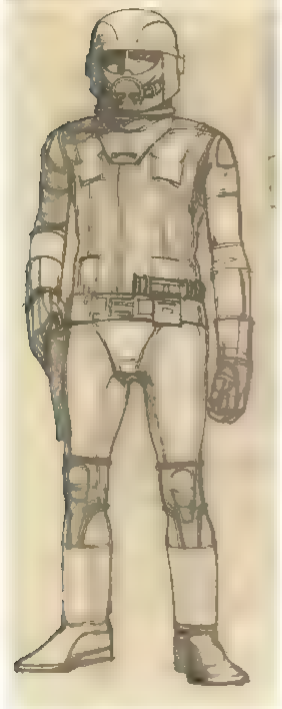
1 Costume sketch, Obi-Wan with *Ben Kenobi* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

2 Costume sketches, Obi-Wan
Obi-Wan's garb was inspired by Toshiro Mifune from Seven Samurai *(1954).*

3 Costume sketch, Obi-Wan
This costume sketch is one of the few McQuarrie colored.

4 Costume sketch (photocopy), Obi-Wan

5 Costume sketches, Owen and Beru Lars with *Owen* and *Brew* [*sic*] titles by Lucas, circa July or August 1975
McQuarrie's costume design notes (see page 80–81), also on the character "Brew," though the screenplay always spells the name "Beru."



FROM THE SECOND DRAFT, JANUARY 1975

At the far end of the passageway a door swings wide, revealing a rebel warrior wearing a breath mask and dressed in the distinctive uniform of an Aquillaian RANGER

"George could have drawn everything himself literally. He draws quite well—shoddily and a little crudely, but he can draw." McQUARRIE

Costume sketch rebel soldier and space helmet
circa February 1975

Costume sketches rebel soldiers and headgear

Costume sketch soldier

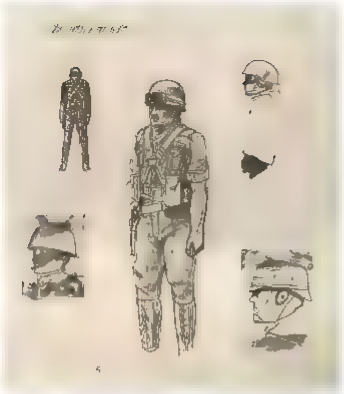
a. Costume sketches (photocopy), Aquillian Rangers

Costume sketch Aquillian Officer, circa February 1975

b. Costume sketch, rebel ranger helmet with rebel ranger title by Lucas

Costume sketch soldier in pilot profile

c. Costume sketch, Rebel Trooper with rebel trooper title by Lucas



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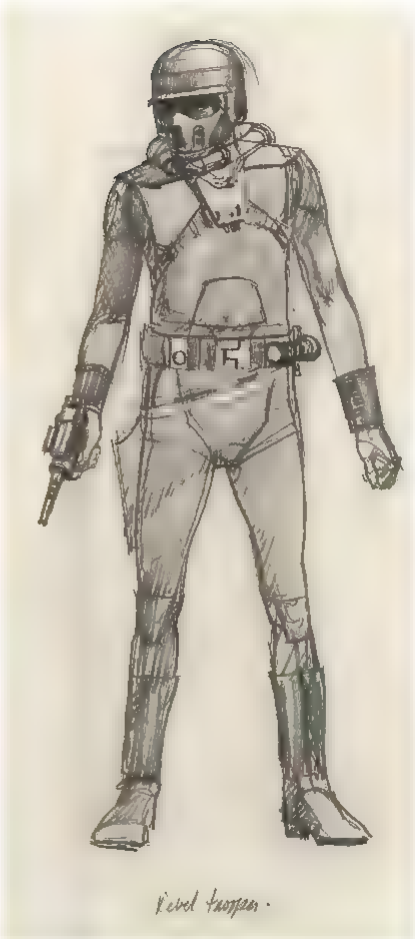
Rebel trooper.

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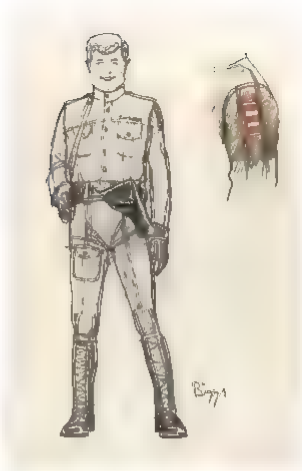

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1 **Costume sketches, pilots and helmets, circa February 1975**

The lower center helmet sketches represent the TIE fighter pilot (see page 40). But it is not clear whether the other helmets are intended to be rebel or imperial. Without rules, a number of McQuarrie's costume sketches are ambiguous. The helmet on the right was inspired by a medieval design in a military illustration, and went on to influence the rebel pilots' helmets. Both the dark visor and swooping back yoke blocks crossed for the film.

2 **Costume sketch, soldier circa February 1975**

3 **Costume sketch, rebel soldiers**

4 **Costume sketch, Biggs with *Biggs* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975**

5 **Costume sketch, rebel soldier**

6 **Costume sketch, Biggs with *Biggs* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975**

"These Tusken Raiders look very much like the original sketch I made up. I started off with the little cap on them, with their faces wrapped up with burlap. Then I thought they should have some sort of goggles on—maybe they have some kind of vision problems, so their eyes have to be modified with this strange eye glass effect. These 'glasses' are really a wide-angle thing, and they look like you're peering down but actually the way the lenses go you can see about 180 degrees. And this mouthpiece is sort of a filter that you breathe through; you breathe outside air through a filter because of their having constant sandstorms. And this little tank [p. 2] is some sort of gas or chemical that was part of their life support to help counteract some of the problems that they were having." McQUARRIE

Concept sketch, Tusken Raider
This Tusken Raider sketch does not incorporate the goggles seen in McQuarrie's other concepts.

2 Concept sketch, Tusken Raider

3 Costume sketch, Tusken Raider with *Tusken Raider* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

4 OPPOSITE Concept sketch, Tusken Raider; head with *Tusken Raider* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

tusken raider

FROM THE THIRD DRAFT, AUGUST 1975

INT. PIRATE STARSHIP - MAIN PASSAGEWAY

The alarm system is suddenly cut short. Han quickly replaces the control panel and turns to see a foul-looking pirate named MONTROSS standing over him

"I never thought of being a filmmaker or working in film until I was actually in it. It was something I thought was reserved for very privileged people—the sons and daughters of film directors and cameramen and actors. You didn't just walk into a studio and ask for a job." MCQUARRIE

1 Concept sketch, Montross face

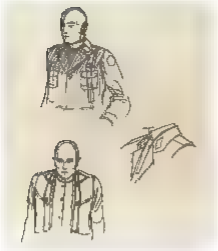
2 Concept sketch, Montross
Various characters were named Montross throughout the early script drafts, but this illustration most likely represents a pirate from the third draft

3 a Costume sketches (photocopy), Imperial officers

3 Costume sketch (photocopy), Imperial bureaucrat with *Imperial Bureaucrat* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

4 Costume sketch, Imperial guard, with *Imperial Guard* title by Lucas, circa July or August 1975

Costume sketch (photocopy), Imperial officer



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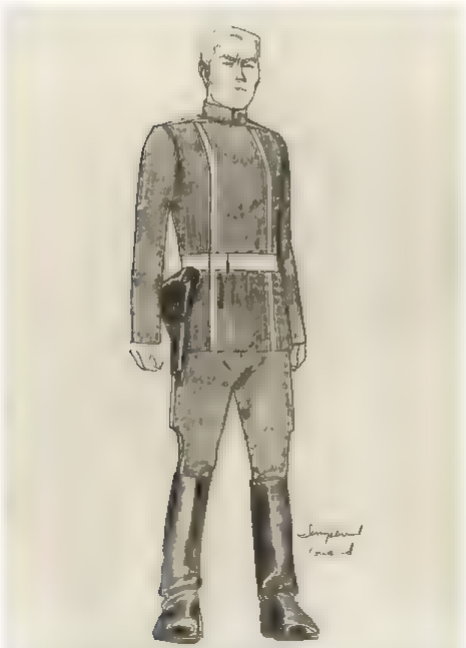

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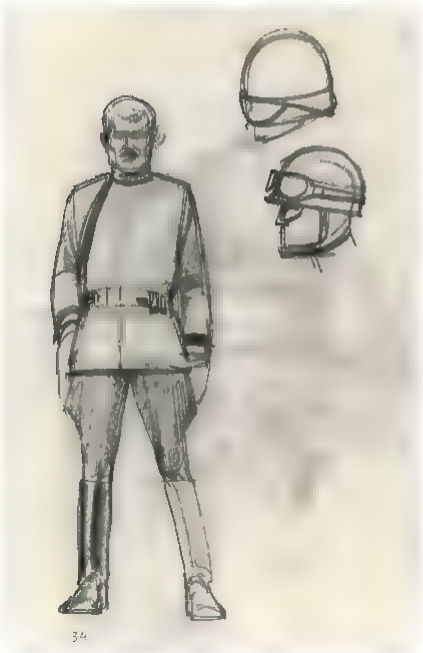
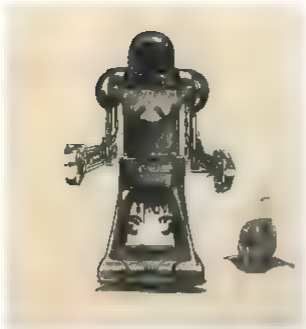




"I was working with a friend on an idea we had for an animated film, and we had this black sphere floating through these hallways with this scanner going around it. And I thought, 'This might make a pretty good idea for the torture robot.'" **McQUARRIE**

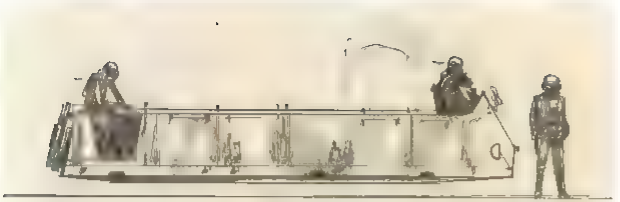
4 Concept sketches, soldier helmets, circa February 1975

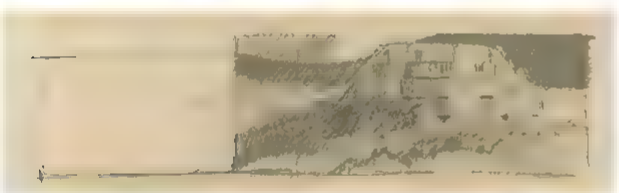
7 Concept sketch (photocopy), Imperial officer

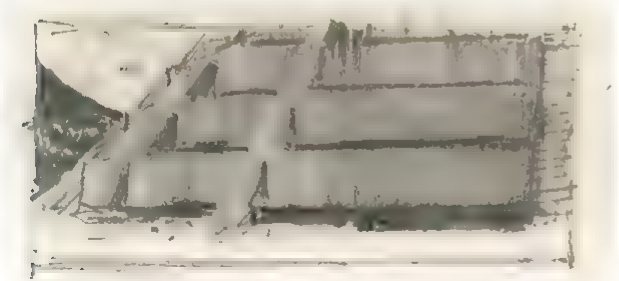
8 Concept sketch, Sith Lord
The Sith Lords first appear in the third draft, depicted as soldiers wearing helmets. The helmet here is clearly derivative of stormtrooper design (see page 8).

A, 5 Concept sketches, torture droid

6 Concept sketches, Death Star droid







FROM THE THIRD DRAFT, AUGUST 1975

FOURTH MOON OF YAVIN - MASASSI [SIC] OUTPOST
An ancient temple sits in the dense jungle.

"Yavin 4 seemed to me like a jungle type of place, with a temperate climate, which had been occupied by an alien race at some time in the past. It was probably thousands of years ago, but the old temples were still there and represented a highly advanced society. It doesn't appear much in the film, but we had quite a thorough idea of what it was like. It was really one of these seven wonders of the galaxy things, a pile of giant disks which had somehow been formed with some hard material and they were this kind of stuff which was so dense that you almost had the feeling that there was less gravity inside this thing." MCQUARRIE

"The rebels couldn't be in a regular civilization, because they were hiding out. So … worked better than an abandoned house.

"I'm trying to make a film that looks very real, with a nitty-gritty reality to it, which is hard to do in a film that is essentially a fantasy. That was the primary essential quality in the thing. Photographically, I'm working on a filtered, nostalgic fantasy, like looking at a story or looking back kind of quality." LUCAS

"Ralph had an idea for *Star Wars*. When the rebels were in the temple, he suggested there might be references to another forgotten alien civilization, like a ghost creature, perhaps part of an oracle, just looking around, bored. It didn't really have anything to do with the plot and the rebels ignored it as they prepared for their attack on the Death Star. Ralph was amazing at coming up with ideas that could suggest more history or background in a fictitious place." BARRON

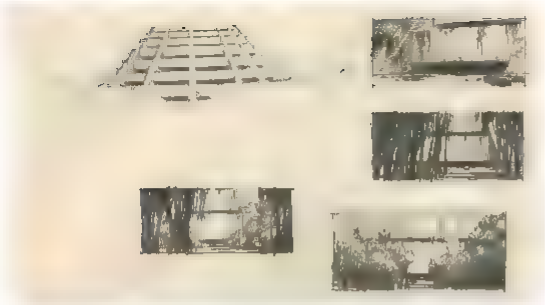
"I was doing the matte painting for the Massassi Temple exterior based on Ralph's production painting. I had altered it to make it look more like a Mayan temple than this big sort of slab thing. I thought I was adding to it and making it better. George took one look at it and said, 'No, do it like Ralph did it.' My attempt at being clever and being better was a failed attempt, and I think that's a huge compliment to Ralph because you had to really do something very special for George for him to say, 'Yes, that's good.' George didn't like settling. He hated to settle. And with Ralph he never had to settle, because Ralph was so good." HARRISON ELLENSHAW, MATTE ARTIST

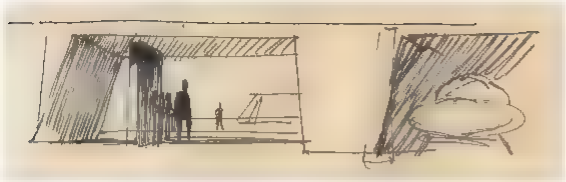
1 **Concept sketches, rebel transport speeder**
Similar speeders are present in the "Rebel spaceship" illustration (see page 63 [9]) and the drawing for the Ideal Exley spaceport illustration (see page 208 [5]).

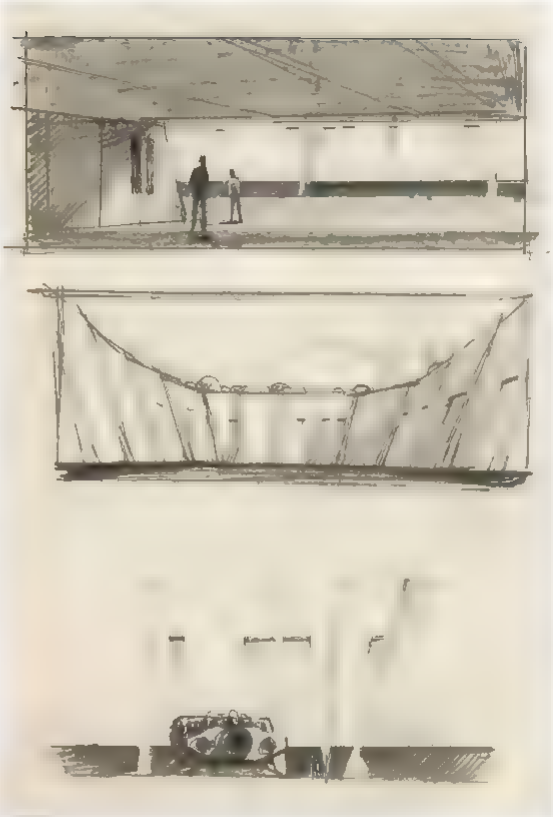
Thumbnail and concept sketches, "Rebel Stronghold"
McQuarrie's sketches show a rebel temple that is distinctly round structure.

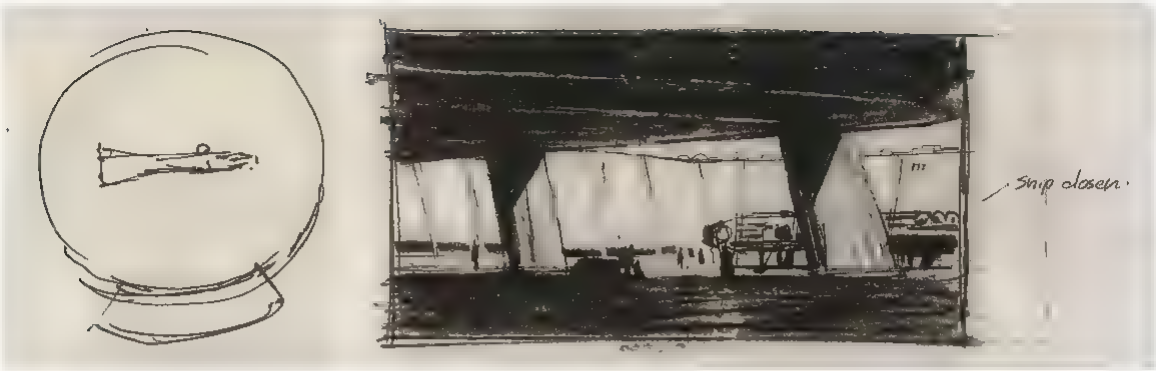
5 **Drawing for production illustration, "Rebel Stronghold"**

6 **Production illustration, "Rebel Stronghold"**
McQuarrie began work on sketching the rebel stronghold in April 1975, though the production illustration may not have been completed until some time later. The temple is absent from the second draft but appears in the third.









PRODUCTION DESIGN

"RALPH MCQUARRIE HEAVILY SHAPED the vision of *Star Wars*," recalls set decorator Roger Christian. "In his own quiet way, Ralph was able to focus George's vision into what could be made." Christian worked closely with production designer John Barry to build *Star Wars*'s sets, continually referencing McQuarrie's paintings as a visual style guide.

Lucas wanted his sets to have a more worn aesthetic than the typical science-fiction designs of the period. "I wanted everything to look very used and very beat up, and I was going for sort of an Art Deco underpinning of a western, gritty, frontier-town look," he says.

"George's way was down and dirty," recalls Christian. "Which was my way, but not necessarily John Barry's way. John had to get used to that. I remember George said if you marry *2001* and *Once Upon a Time in the West*, where everything is very dusty, there is the look of the film."

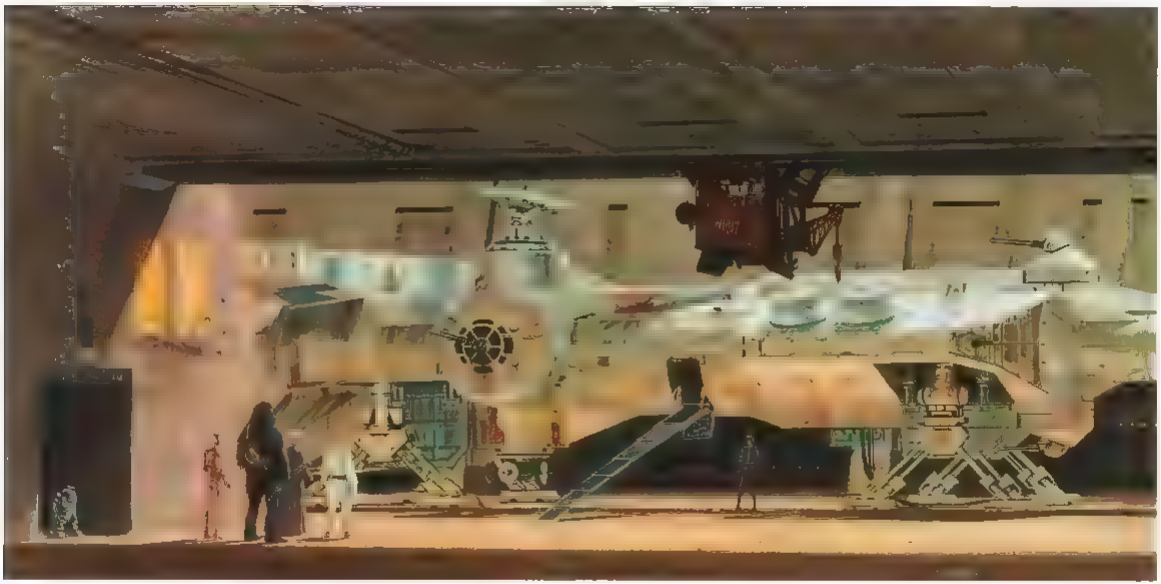
While there are touches of a dirty, worn environment in McQuarrie's paintings—the blaster damage on the hull of the *Falcon* in the Mos Eisley docking bay, for example—the concept was nurtured and extrapolated upon by John Barry and Roger Christian, who repurposed real-world industrial scrap (and the accompanying industrial grime) to decorate the otherworldly sets on stage and location.

McQuarrie's production paintings established the look of a number of the film's key sets, including the Death Star interiors, the Blockade Runner interiors, and the Mos Eisley docking bay. While these were realized almost directly from McQuarrie's production paintings, he did not conceive all of the film's sets. Many originated from the mind of John Barry, who worked hand in hand with Lucas in the same way McQuarrie did. Barry's overriding concerns as production designer were those of practicality. "Preconceived ideas are very dangerous because you find yourself building things that don't fit in any stage," Barry says. "Whereas normally you work backward from a wide-open concept, sets are sets and sketches are sketches. They're not quite the same thing. What makes a set interesting is when you move around in it. When you look at the sets and look at McQuarrie's sketches, you can see where the influence has been retained, and where we've departed from it for practical reasons, or because we felt it would make a better scene."

Barry's contributions to the film were not limited to sets alone—as production designer he was a part of the development of all elements of the film. While McQuarrie and Barry did not spend a great deal of time working together directly, Lucas had a similar relationship with both men, and the three of them developed the designs in an organic fashion. "It's not generally known how much John Barry contributed to the film, but I know," said McQuarrie. "I remember I had my drawings of See Threepio, and George and I had a meeting with John Barry at Universal. He looked at my drawings and saw those little slot eyes, and he immediately picked up a piece of paper and made a sketch of Threepio's head with big round eyes, and it was perfect. He solved the dull personality problem that was conveyed by those little slot eyes. John fixed up a lot of things I had. Sometimes I was kind of amazed how he took suggestions I made and blew them up to theatrical proportion so they were really dramatic. John gave everything his touch, so you can't say that something belonged only to me, or John, or to George. It was really a group effort."

Thumbnail sketches, Mos Eisley spaceport docking area

Concept sketch (photocopy), Mos Eisley spaceport docking area
The thumbnail at left is McQuarrie's loose sketch for the overhead layout of the docking bay.



FROM THE THIRD DRAFT, AUGUST 1975

MOS EISLEY SPACEPORT - DOCKING AREA 23

Chewbacca leads the group along a tall gantry over looking a long Rube Goldburg pieced together contraption, which can only be loosely called a spaceship. Luke gives Old Ben a skept cal look. Old Ben just smiles. As they approach the ship it looks even more homemade and shabby than it did at a distance. The Wookiee calls out to someone inside the ship, but there is no reply.

LUKE
What a piece of junk. This ship can't going to get us anywhere.

A tall figure steps out of the shadows of the imposing spacecraft.

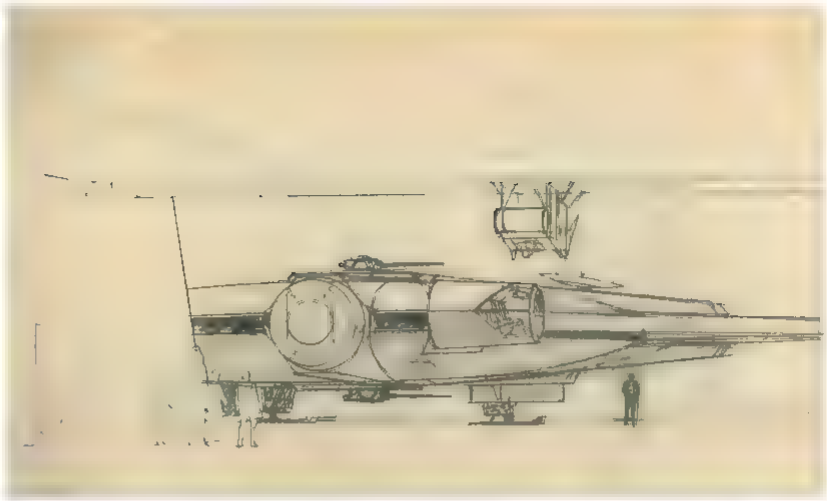
This is HAN SOLO, a tough James Dean style stereotype about twenty-five years old. A cowboy in a starship -- simple, sentimental and cocksure of himself.

"Some paintings evolved as the spaceships evolved. Like we had paintings with the old pirate starship, and then we changed it to the new pirate starship [the *Millennium Falcon*]." LUCAS

"George thought the old spaceship looked too much like the Eagle ship in *Space: 1999*. That's it, it's some sort of a crane that we looked at and thought it was too contemporary looking.

"I have forgotten when George came up with the idea that he wanted everything kind of worn out and dirty. I recall a painting showing the *Falcon* in the hangar of Mos Eisley, and he kept saying, 'Make it more battered and dirty and beat up.' That's the first time I can remember him bringing the subject up." MCQUARRIE

"We decided the ship that Colin Cantwell had laid out wasn't right for the *Millennium Falcon*, so Ralph had to go back and paint that over with the new *Millennium Falcon* [based on Joe Johnston's design and ILM's model shop work]. It was one of the paintings that we wanted to use to help promote the film, so the *Falcon* had to look right." KURTZ



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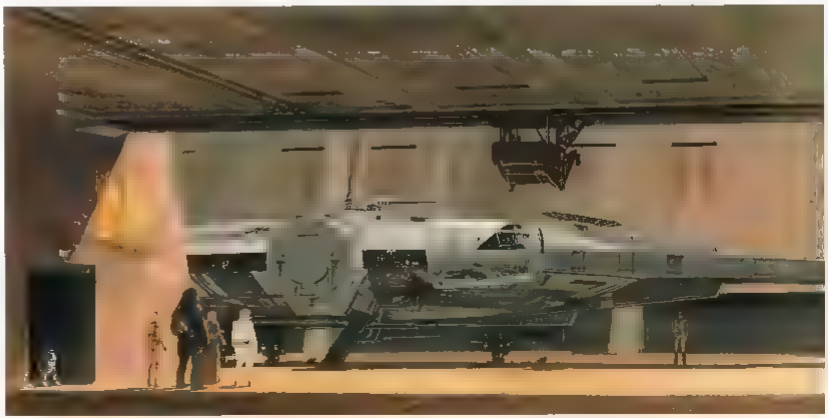

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1 **Concept model by Colin Cantwell, pirate ship (flopped)**

2 **Model miniature by ILM, pirate ship**
The model was refitted as the rebel Blockade Runner after the Falcon was retrofitted.

3 **Thumbnail sketch, Mos Eisley spaceport hangar**
The thumbnail depicts Colin Cantwell's pirate ship design [1] identifiable by the three wrench- and lock-of-rope dish.

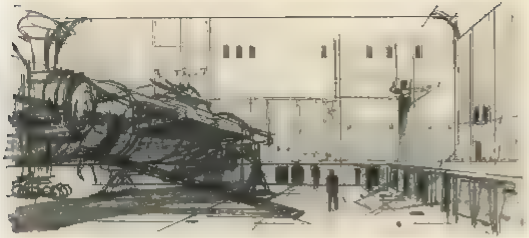
4 **Production illustration, Mos Eisley spaceport hangar with pirate ship, version 2, circa Fall 1975**
The pirate ship in the production illustration is the ILM version easily identifiable by its two dropoff radar dish and large rear engine cluster. The bulk and of gear here were never incorporated into ILM's model miniature [2], but did appear on pirate ship drawings by the ILM art department.

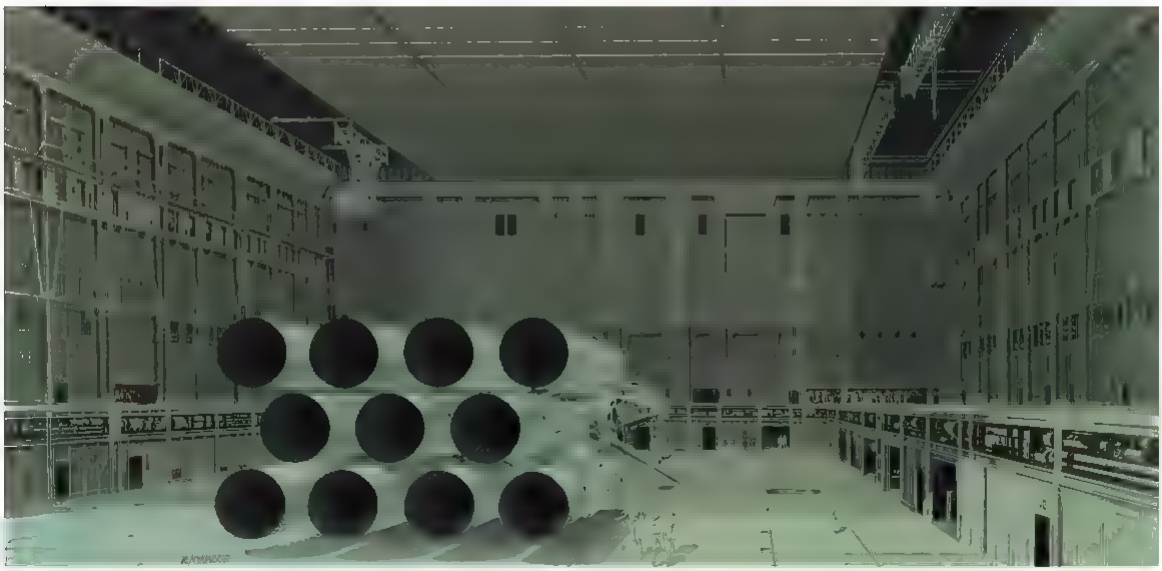
5 **Drawing for production illustration, Mos Eisley spaceport hangar foreground elements**

6 **Drawing for production illustration, Mos Eisley spaceport hangar with updated *Falcon* design**

7 **Production illustration, Mos Eisley spaceport hangar with updated *Falcon* design, version 2, circa early 1976**
When the Millennium Falcon was redesigned in December 1975, McQuarrie painted over his original version of the spaceport to have the viewer's sight line intersect with the ship's cockpit. The interior of the hangar was therefore repainted in its entirety.

FOLLOWING SPREAD: Detail from production illustration, Mos Eisley spaceport hangar with updated *Falcon* design, version 2, circa early 1976





1 Thumbnail sketches, "Hangar scene Death Star"

Production illustration, "Hangar scene Death Star, version 1," November 28, 1975

The pilot ship, a Mon Calamari cruiser, the smaller of the two ships in the foreground, was based on a model originally built for the unproduced TV series "Blake's 7." The Death Star, in the background, was created to match McQuarrie's drawing. The ship in the foreground was the first to be painted. The hangar was painted next, and the Falcon was painted last. McQuarrie produced another illustration in the "John Barry" series with improvements and additional detail.

3 Drawing for production illustration, "Hangar scene Death Star" update

4 Production illustration, "Hangar scene Death Star" with updated *Falcon*, version 2, circa early 1976

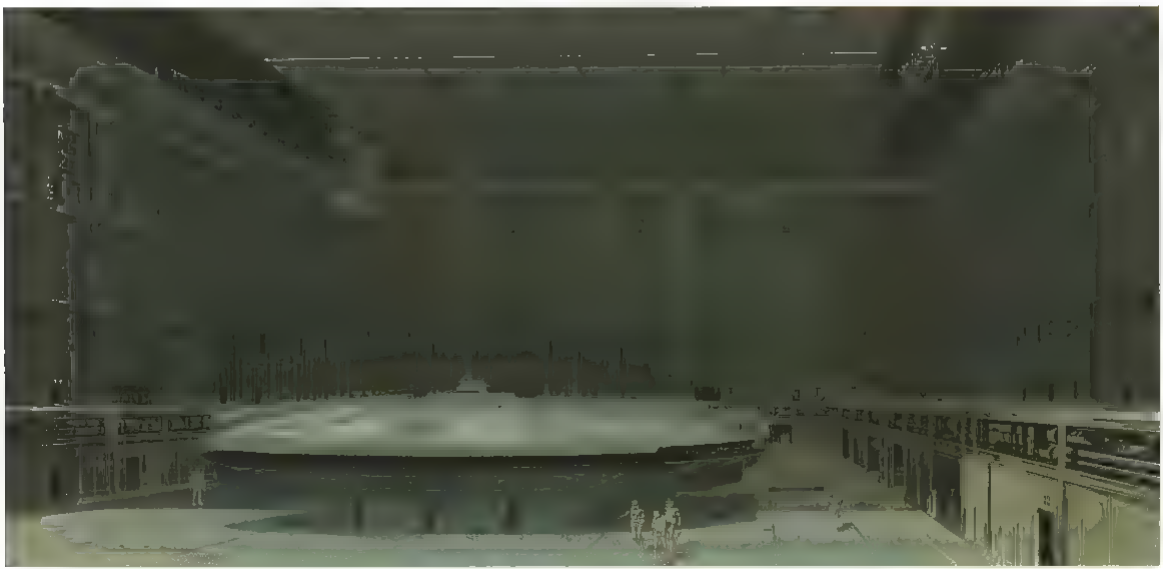
McQuarrie painted over his original illustration to produce an updated version showing the new Falcon design which was implemented nearly after the first one. The illustration was completed. The quality detail in the upper left was added over with the final few touches of the paint job at the hangar.

FROM THE THIRD DRAFT AUGUST 1975

ALDERAAN MAIN FORWARD BAY

The pirate starship rests in a huge hanger bay. Thirty or so guards march up to the craft as a ramp lowers and the boarding troops disembark.

"This was just a simple attempt on my part to put the elements together that hadn't been together—the ship and the hangar. The figures are just in there for scale and to get the lighting right and so we could feel the effect of the whole set. John Barry really did the hanger over and did a much more dramatic job of it, full of shapes and goodies." MCQUARRIE



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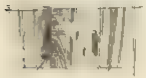
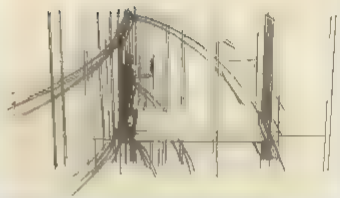




"This was Luke and the princess. This was John Barry's idea, to have this cliffhanger scene where the bridge comes back and they throw the little hook, they call it the Lash LaRue scene … was thinking about being inside that big round city of Anderaan … at that time an Imperial prison …, and this scene was kind of close to the core of it. That's why all this stuff was curved, because … thought of everything radiating from a central core." McQUARRIE

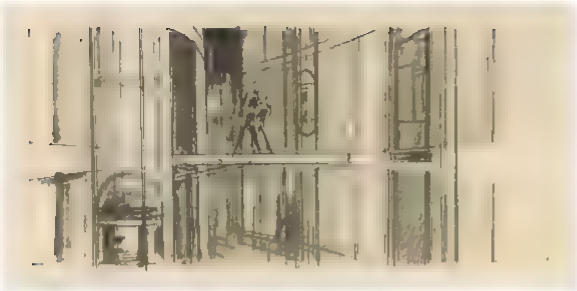
Thumbnail sketches, Death Star chasm bridge

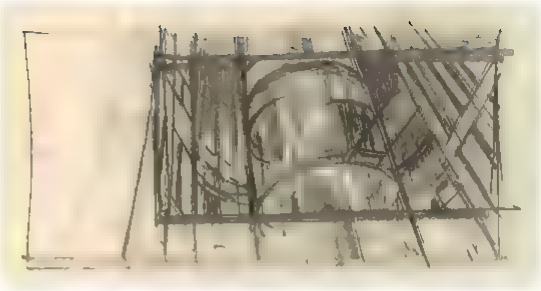
3 Thumbnail sketch (from transparency), Death Star chasm bridge

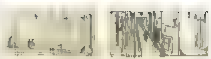
Thumbnail sketch, Death Star chasm bridge

5 Production illustration, "Lash LaRue," Luke vaults over space left by retractable bridge. November 23, 1975

[illegible] fourth draft [illegible] 1975 [illegible] for [illegible] bridge a [illegible] of [illegible] the Death Star [illegible] temporarily [illegible] building. The [illegible] on the [illegible] to [illegible] appear [illegible] Death Star [illegible] he [illegible] was [illegible] moved [illegible] the [illegible]







STARSHIPS

THE STARSHIPS OF *STAR WARS* are one of the few areas where McQuarrie did not make a significant design contribution. Though McQuarrie did loose sketches of ships early on, model maker Colin Cantwell's role was specifically to develop early concepts for the ships. "Colin had a history of aircraft design and had worked with other science-fiction films, so we hired him to do some ship designs," recalls Kurtz. "It never occurred to us that one person would do or could do everything, so Colin was specifically focused on doing models. We needed fabricated models, and Colin had a history of doing that very well."

Lucas provided Cantwell with descriptions and sketches of what would become the film's primary crafts. Lucas gave them names like the "dart" (which became the X-wing fighter), "stingray," "WWII torpedo fighter," "finned sausage," and "stainless steel rat," which provided Cantwell with the same loose information that had been fed McQuarrie. Cantwell completed a number of ship illustrations before beginning on physical models. Lucas discussed designing one craft in a manner where a prop body could be secured to a real Spanish fighter plane for airfield scenes, but the cost of the planes quickly killed the idea. "My early drawings of spacecraft didn't please George. I tended to get a little old-fashioned looking with them—not quite zippy enough," McQuarrie recalled. "He had Colin Cantwell making models, and later he had Joe Johnston making drawings of the spacecraft too. I did a few things, like the sandcrawler."

Cantwell built a number of prototype models over several months in early 1975 that were used to start the visual effects conversations with effects supervisor John Dykstra. McQuarrie would visit Cantwell regularly and photograph the models for incorporation into his ongoing series of paintings. One of Cantwell's strongest influences was the rebel Y-wing fighter. Cantwell's design originated with minimal direction from Lucas, and was incorporated into several of McQuarrie's early production illustrations including "Battle for Death Star (fighters dive on sphere)" (see page 44 [1]), TIE fighter pilot (see page 47 [4]), "Fantastic Five" (see page 61 [7]), "Rebel spacebase (see page 63 [9]).

By the time all of the models were complete Dykstra had begun at ILM. "Dykstra and I sat down with Joe Johnston," Lucas recalls. "John changed the designs for his technical needs. We have to make these faster, or they won't show up on blue screen,' 'we have to fatten the body up here'—that kind of thing. They were practical decisions, not aesthetic. Joe added all the aesthetics in terms of detailing—he was the one that actually detailed them out."

The final ship designs were the work of a team of people, as explained by Lucas:

TIE fighter: "The TIE ships were influenced by some John Berkey paintings. I would say they're about 60 percent mine and 40 percent Cantwell's."

Death Star: "The Death Star I would say is 80 percent or 90 percent mine. It's just a giant satellite."

X-wing: "The X-wing was about 50/50 [Cantwell and Lucas]. I wanted it based on a dragster, a long narrow thing with a guy sitting on the back."

Y-wing: "The Y-wing was more or less Cantwell's."

Rebel Blockade Runner (originally the pirate ship): "I would say it's about 20 percent mine, 40 percent Colin's, and 40 percent Dykstra and Joe Johnston's. They made quite a change on it."

Star Destroyer: "The Imperial Space Cruiser was about 40 percent me and 60 percent Colin."

Millennium Falcon: "The flying hamburger was about 60 or 70 percent my design, and the rest was Joe Johnston."

As with costume designs, Lucas had strong feelings about the overall design aesthetic of the ships. "I did everything I could to make the Imperial ships completely different to the rebel ships," he says.

"I designed a Death Star that had a whole different look to it, in the shape of a photo enlarger [2, 3]. More or less the whole thing was built to be this big cannon. It was a big giant laser cannon in my estimation—a sphere for me was too benign, too nice a shape—but it worked out great in the film. I had a concept for the Death Star that was quite a bit smaller than what eventually we ended up with. George liked a ship that John Berkey painted, and he wanted the Death Star to be like that. He didn't want it to be a copy of the Berkey ship, obviously, but something in that area." MCQUARRIE

Concept sketches by George Lucas, "(TIE) imperial fighter" and other starships
Lucas drew his ideas for the Tie-winged TIE Imperial fighter, the X-wing, and the Death Star for McQuarrie.

2 3 Concept sketches, (from transparency), early Death Star
McQuarrie experimented with various forms for the Death Star, including one he likened to a piece of photo-enlarging equipment.

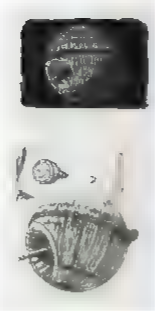
4 Concept sketches (from transparency), Death Star

5 Notes and concept sketches by George Lucas, starships
These early sketches by George Lucas outlining his ideas for the film's ships were provided to concept model maker Colin Cantwell circa late 1974. The now-familiar X-wing fighter as this point was simply dubbed "dart." The "WWII torpedo fighter" was the idea that Cantwell advanced into the Y-wing, one of the earliest starship designs to be solidified. McQuarrie incorporated the Y-wing into many of his early works, he did not incorporate X-wings until much later—all of the X-wings illustrated by McQuarrie are the ILM re-design (circa August 1975).

6 Concept sketches (from transparency), X-wing and unknown starships

7 Concept model by Colin Cantwell, X-wing fighter
Cantwell began building model starships a few months prior to McQuarrie starting his concept work. The two artists met regularly once he was underway, and McQuarrie incorporated Cantwell's developing models into his illustrations.

8 A Joe Johnston sketch for the X-wing fighter developed from Cantwell's original model [7]. McQuarrie integrated Johnston's X-wing into several paintings



A. Rebel Fighter Craft

RF-1 (Dart)

RF-2 (Stingray)

RF-3 (WWII Torpedo Fighter) Colan design

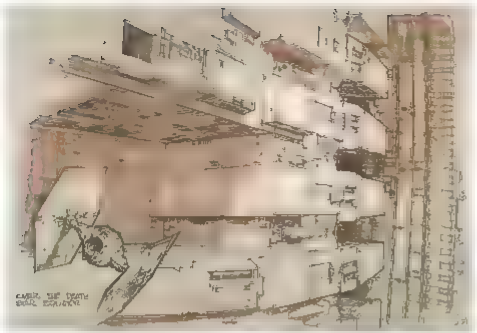
B. Imperial Fighter

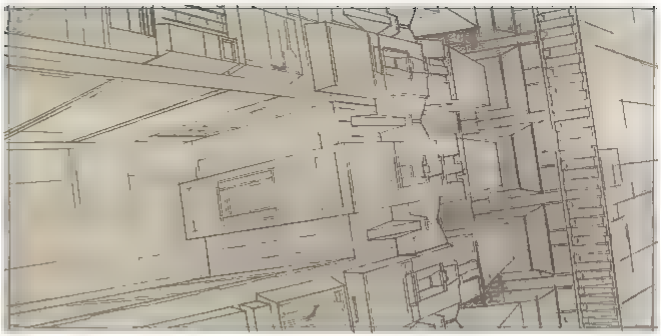
I-III (Finned Sausage) (stainless steel ant)

C. Rebel Blockade Runner ??

RBR-1 ? (SSZ Boat cover)

D Pirate Ship.





FROM THE FOURTH DRAFT BY GEORGE LUCAS, JANUARY 1976

SURFACE OF THE DEATH STAR

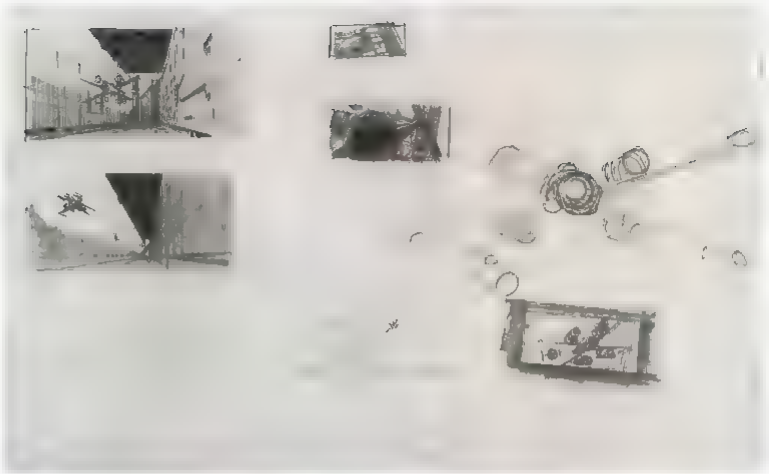
Blue Ten and Twelve blast through the wall of laser fire in the deep trench leading to the exhaust port

"The first thing that influenced me was the dogfight in outer space. That was my original idea. I said, 'I want to make that movie. I want to see that.'" LUCAS

"I met Ralph at the [ILM] Van Nuys facility sometime in the fall of 1975. He came by to get a firsthand look at some of the new designs and models under construction. Gary Kurtz had already sent Ralph some of my design sketches on the X-wing and Y-wing, but because they were all works in progress and no two sketches were alike, he wanted to see the models after the design direction had been determined and before he started the concept art. We had a long talk mostly about the three small ship designs—the X-wing, Y-wing, and TIE fighter. Ralph was always very friendly and collaborative. He was a brilliant artist and very generous with his knowledge and ideas." JOHNSTON

"There were maybe ten people in the little warehouse. Joe Johnston and I were upstairs in the art department, where we had these wooden tables on sawhorses on the plywood floor and we were just drawing X-wings all day with our tracing paper and Rapidograph technical pens. But when Ralph McQuarrie would come in, production manager Bob Shepherd would let the word get out that he was there. Everybody would go to the front office and there'd be one of Ralph's illustrations on a piece of illustration board with tissue paper over it. One time Ralph folded the tissue paper back to reveal this painting of a TIE fighter over the Death Star with an X-wing—just this incredibly detailed, beautiful painting that I'd never seen such a high quality of skill. I was just knocked out by that vision." PAUL HUSTON, MODEL BUILDER

"George just wanted an atmosphere sketch of the action and the haze of laser fire [sic]." MCQUARRIE



Sketch by Joe Johnston, Death Star surface detail

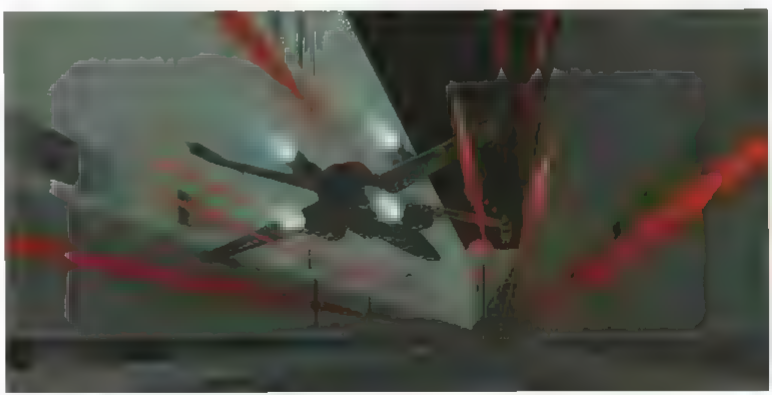
Modified sketch by Johnston, by the Death Star, where the TIE fighters fly over. Details of panels and trenches

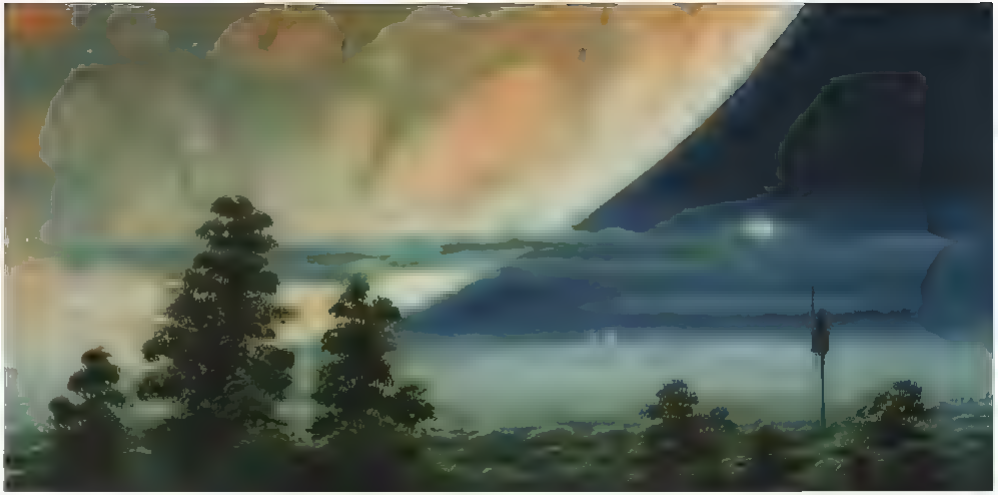
2 Drawing for production illustration (photocopy), "Fighters flow over Death Star"

3 Production illustration, "Fighters flow over Death Star," November 21, 1975

4 Sketches for production illustration, "Fighters dash down trench"

5 Production illustration, "Fighters dash down trench," November 25, 1975





FROM THE THIRD DRAFT AUGUST 1975

INT MASASSI [SIC] OUTPOST - MAIN THRONE ROOM

Luke, Artoo Threepio Han and Chewbacca enter the huge ruins of the main temple.

Hundreds of troops are lined up in neat rows. Banners are flying and at the far end stands a vision in white, the beautiful young Princess Leia. Luke and the others solemnly march up the long aisle and kneel before Princess Leia.

"Some of the paintings Ralph did from my descriptions of the sets afterward. I had a session with George on the throne room particularly, and George went back and described it to Ralph who then did the painting from the concept we knew we could handle." JOHN BARRY PRODUCTION DESIGNER

"George said that he would like a huge crowd of soldiers that go off into the haze. The banners I thought of as just being indicative of this whole pageant feeling." McQUARRIE

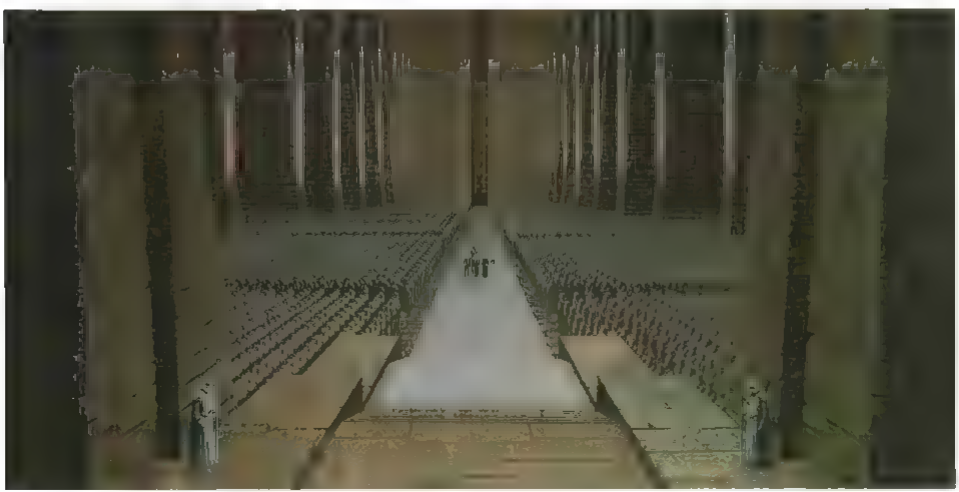
1 Thumbnail sketch, rebel ceremony

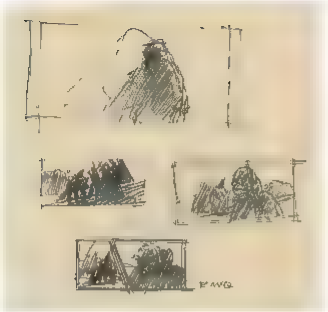
2 Thumbnail sketches, rebel ceremony

3 Thumbnail sketches, rebel ceremony

4 Preliminary illustration, "Throne Room"

5 Production illustration, "Throne Room," December 5, 1975

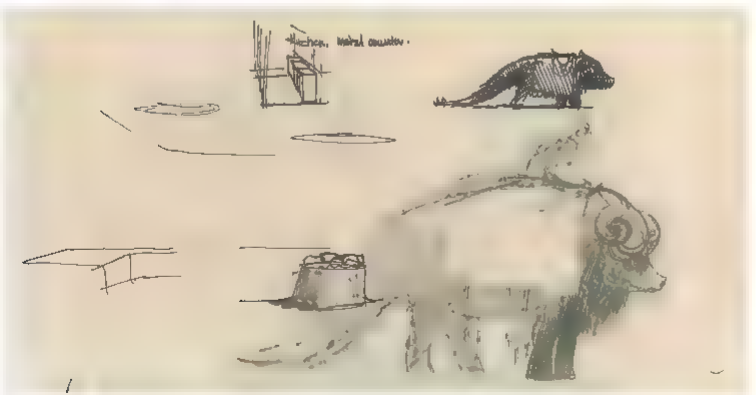




"I wanted the Tusken Raiders to be sort of like Bedouins, but at the same time very strange and mechanical. You look at that painting of the Tusken Raiders and the banthas [5] and you say, 'Oh yeah, Bedouins.' Then you look again and say, 'Wait a minute, that's not right. Those aren't Bedouins, that's a weird what are those back there? I thought they were— wait a minute, I haven't seen that before— what is that?' You know, it's a big furry thing." LUCAS

"There was a single tree in the location square where we were going to build Mos Eisley. I wanted to follow Ralph's inspiration in building the set, so I decided to add the crashed ship from the Tusken Raider painting. The tree was ruining the set, so production designer John Barry just said, 'Build this ship big enough to hide the tree.' I knew I wouldn't get scrap in Tunisia, so I loaded so much scrap to take down there to build the crashed ship ([5], left of bantha)." CHRISTIAN

"Ralph McQuarrie gave the *Star Wars* universe a visual iconography. Arguably, McQuarrie's work was as important as anyone's in creating what we all now know to be *Star Wars*. He certainly did visually what John Williams did musically. He made *Star Wars* specific. Often taking primary shapes and using them in incredible combination, he created imagery that was as exotic and believable as it was easy for a kid to understand and remember. It was also, despite some familiarity, like nothing anyone had ever seen." ABRAMS



2 Thumbnail sketches for production illustration, "Tusken Raiders"

Concept sketch for production illustration, "Tusken Raiders"

3 Concept sketch, "Tusken Raiders"

This sketch may have been done as a costume sketch, as it bears a strong resemblance to McQuarrie's other Tusken Raider costume designs (see page 88).

4 Concept sketches, bantha and Beru's kitchen counter

Production illustration, "Tusken Raiders," December 7, 1976

5

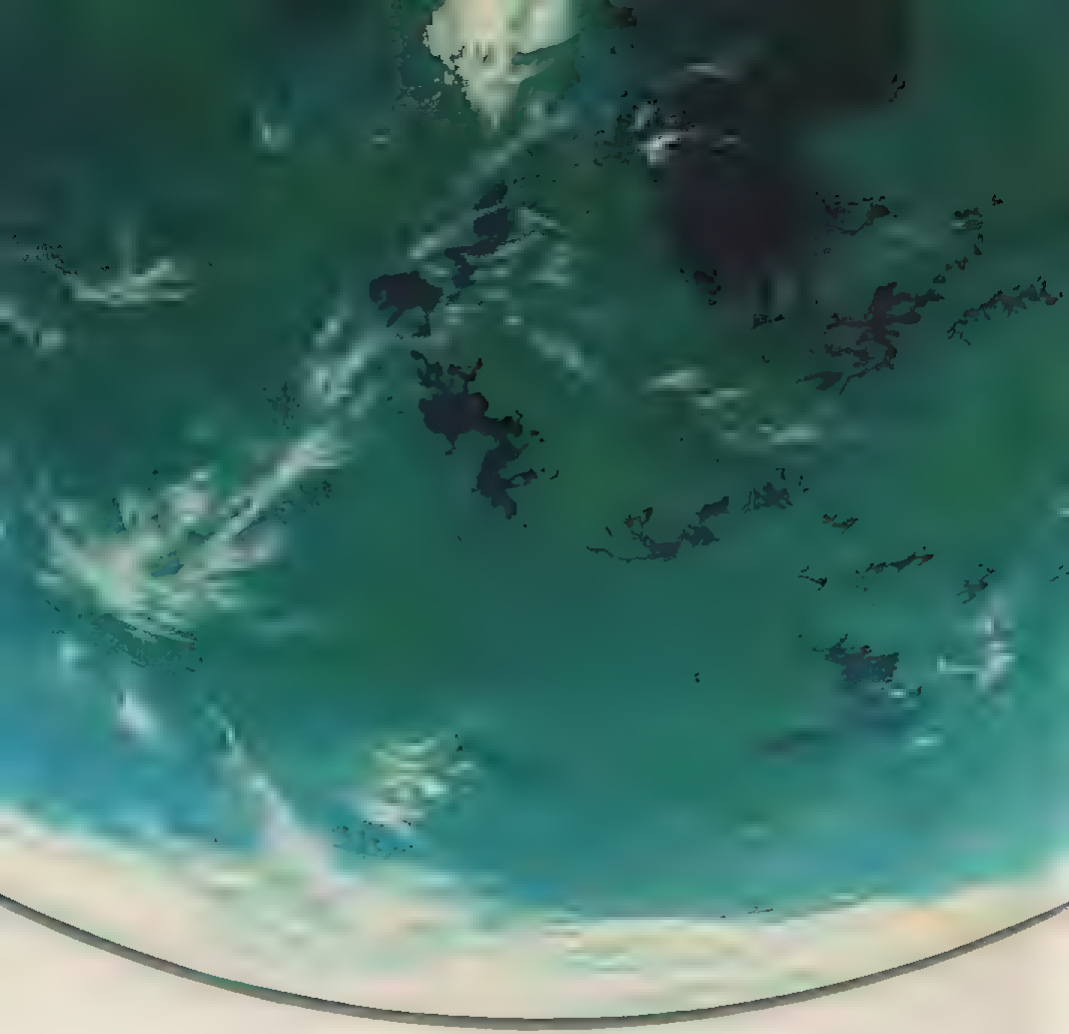
SOUND DESIGN

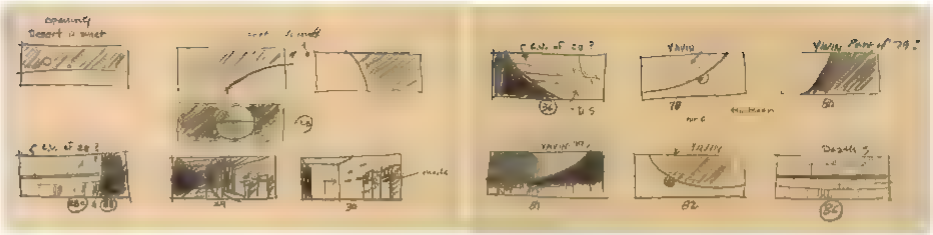
THE INSPIRATION PROVIDED by the early McQuarrie *Star Wars* paintings was not exclusive to the visual realm, but extended into sound design as well. Ben Burtt, who had been hired out of USC to help George Lucas develop a library of potential sounds for the film, had a visceral reaction to seeing the original five illustrations for the first time. "When I met George and Gary Kurtz] in their office at Universal in July 1975 they had five of McQuarrie's paintings on the bulletin board. They used them to explain to me that this was the movie they wanted to make," Burtt recalls. "I was absolutely enthralled. I had immediate inspiration from those paintings."

Burtt was hired not long after as a production assistant on the film. He split his time between typical production assistant duties and gathering sound effects. As he thought about what the *Star Wars* galaxy might sound like, he honed in on what would become one of the key elements of the film—the lightsaber. "The one that was most influential was the lightsaber painting," says Burtt. "The painting gave me immediate inspiration, and it was the first sound that I made. It's the painting with Vader and Luke [sic] crouching. I could hear the sound of the lightsaber from seeing that picture. I had it in my mind right away, and I said, 'I know what I want from this.'"

Another direct inspiration for Burtt was McQuarrie's Tusken Raider painting. "I had pictures of the paintings on the wall, so I was looking at them every day," says Burtt. "I had about ten different things that I had collected that all might be Tusken Raider elements, and I remember making the sounds for the Tusken Raider while I looked at the painting and thinking, 'Would this sound come out of that head?' The sound had to seem like it's coming from that heavily masked creature."

Not all of the film's sound effects came so easily. "There were things I read in the script that I hadn't seen yet in any form, and they were harder to find inspiration for," Burtt says. "My inspiration has a lot to do with seeing the design for something. So having those paintings was very important. The more artwork I could see, the better."





MATTE PAINTING

MCQUARRIE'S ON-SCREEN CREDIT on *Star Wars* was "Planet and Satellite Artist" on account of the matte paintings he did for the film. His realistic style of illustration lent itself well to the matte paintings that would be created to expand the scope of the film. One of cinema's oldest visual tricks, traditional matte shots combine a live-action plate with a painting done on a sheet of glass. An open space is left on the glass where the live-action element will be composited in. Matte paintings allow filmmakers to combine shots of actors taken during principal photography with artist-created backgrounds and settings done months later in post-production.

It was Lucas who first suggested McQuarrie move on from concept paintings to matte paintings, recognizing the similarities in the two disciplines. He asked that McQuarrie work on some of the planets and Death Star architecture—pieces that would function as stand-alone paintings in the film and not need to be blended with live-action plates. Because hiding the join between the plate and painting can be quite tricky, Lucas assumed the more experienced Ellenshaw would handle those shots. "I met Ralph and he seemed like a lovely man. I was very impressed with what he did," recalls Ellenshaw.

"The matte painting project interested me," McQuarrie said. "Harrison Ellenshaw was going to do the matte paintings and the photography. I met him at Disney, and he got out a bunch of matte paintings from wonderful matte painters of days gone by. I looked at the paintings and thought 'Gee, they look awful, painterly for having to stand up on the big screen as photography.' Then I went to a movie to see how big the screen really appears from an ordinary seat in the theater. I noticed that the sight size of the screen was not that big. I thought, 'That's not a big blow-up of my painting, that's a reduction. I'm going to make the painting about six feet wide.' I also realized that the painting was going to be broken up into the grain of the film so that all the little brushstrokes and the edges and so forth are softened. And that solved the problem of the painterly image for me."

When McQuarrie began to paint, his strategy was to make the paintings as realistic as possible. "I had a hunch that the best way to go was more photographic, or more detailed," he said. "So I went that way and spent a lot of time on things where I later realized I could have spent a third of the time on it and gotten the same effect. I came to the conclusion that you could get away with a lot in a matte painting. Because it seemed to me the broad effect was all you needed. You could go wrong, surely. But if you had the general effect, you had it, and it was going to work."

ILM did not have a true matte department at the time (Ellenshaw describes the studio as "threadbare"), so McQuarrie did much of his work on the matte paintings at home in his LA apartment. Ellenshaw did some of his work at Disney studios in Burbank and moonlighted at ILM in the evenings. "I would go in and Harrison would put the live-action plate [up] in the camera at ILM, and I would trace out a drawing on tissue. I laid it out so I had a diagram of where everything would go," McQuarrie said.

He could then develop the painting at home on sheets of glass sized to fit into his car, so they could be transported back to ILM. The paintings were done on glass so that by backlighting them they could become a matte for use in compositing the elements of the shot. "The painting is used as its own matte. You shoot the painting and then you reverse the light, and now the painting is a black silhouette, like a stencil," said McQuarrie. "And the area that is going to be the live action is white, and you expose that to the film. Then you can make a reserve of that on high-contrast film, and use that for a mask to hold out what you want to print. The problem is getting the painting and the live action to look like they're one and the same thing on the same piece of film."

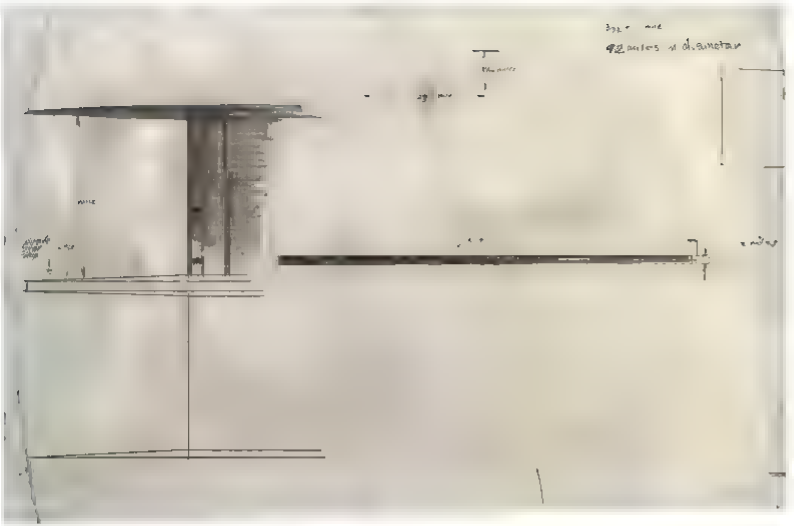
The rookie matte painter completed all of the planet paintings in *Star Wars*. The smallest, a Yavin moon painted on illustration board, measured little more than three inches wide. He also completed several Death Star exterior paintings and began a Death Star interior painting that was completed by Ellenshaw. The veteran Ellenshaw handled all the other matte paintings, which incorporated live-action plates and therefore required careful analysis and color timing to achieve an acceptable composite.

"I was a pinch hitter as a matte painter, but it was kind of neat to have designed things and then do the matte painting and have it show up on film. So some of those elements were all mine," McQuarrie said.

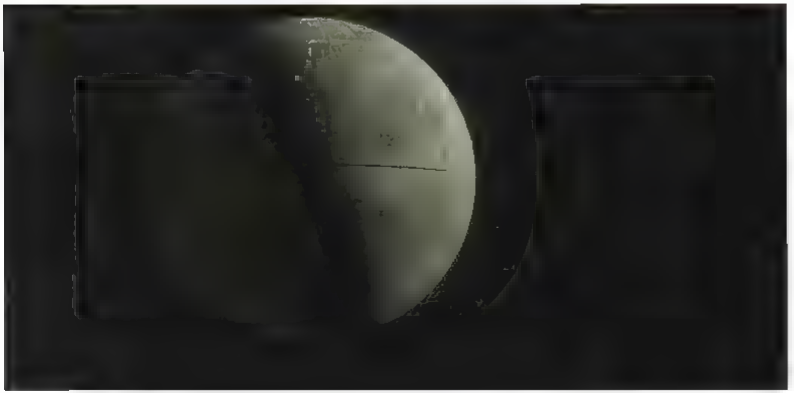
OPPOSITE: Detail from matte painting, Fourth moon of Yavin (see page 143 [4])

Thumbnail sketches, various planet matte paintings

The numbers next to each sketch frames are board numbers from the visual effects storyboards.



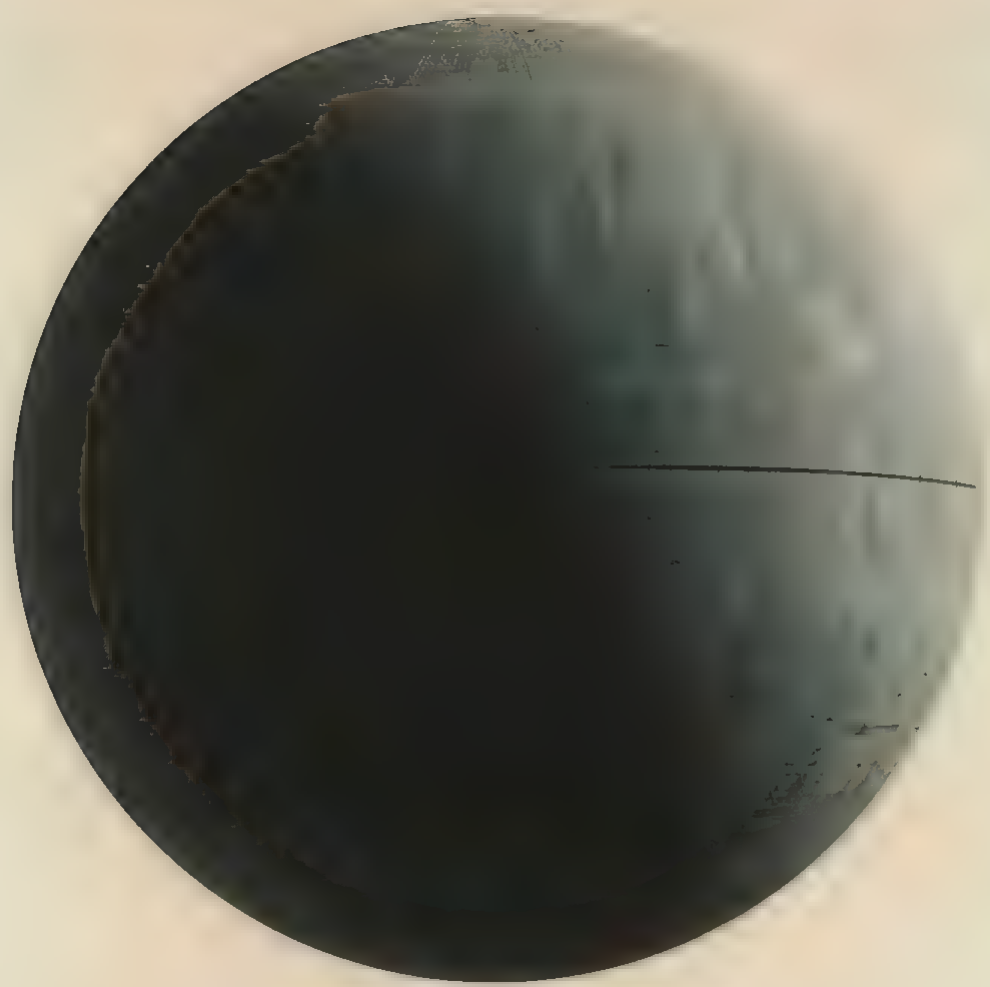
"...the Death Star remains a sphere of reasonable proportions, we've increased the size of the sphere so that it would have a flat horizon when you were standing on the surface." McQUARRIE

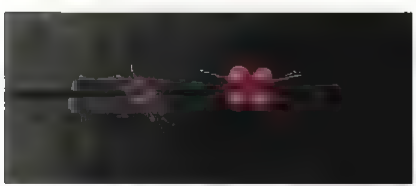


Technical drawing, Death Star trench docking bay entrance

Preliminary illustration for matte painting, Death Star

[illegible] Matte painting, Death Star, February 27–March [illegible], 1976



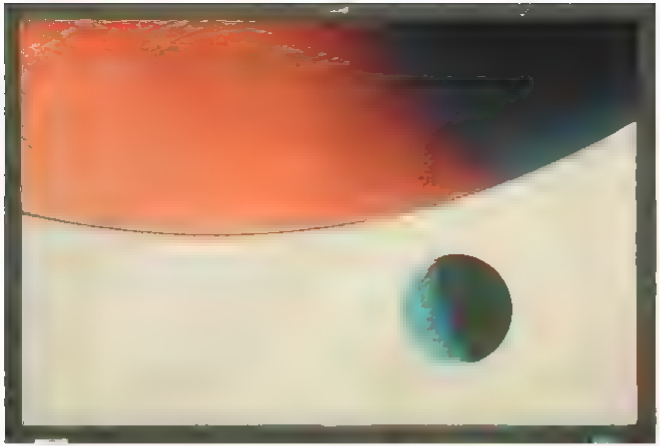


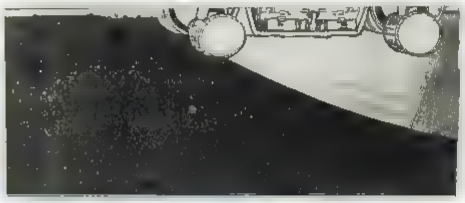
The Death Star was an interesting problem. We started out with a matte painting (as on prior page): a piece of glass, and we were going to move the camera in and matte out all of the extraneous frame for the matte painting with garbage mattes. We did that and it looked pretty round and nice and convincing until you started to move. Don't. As you moved in, it started to look flat because there should be a subtle perspective change; this thing kind of wants to come out at you, and it wasn't doing that. So we gave up on the idea of matte painting and went to a model." McQUARRIE

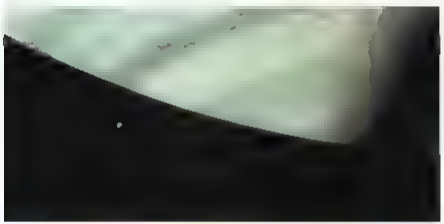
3 Matte painting, Death Star surface, March 3[illegible] 1976

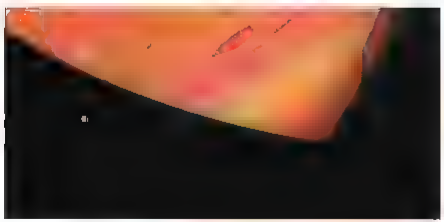
2 Film frame, X-wings descend on Death Star
[illegible]

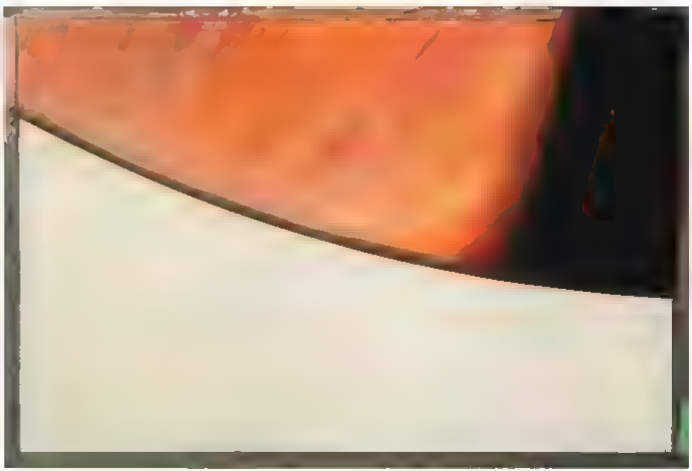
OPPOSITE Detail from matte painting, Death Star surface, March 2–17, 1976
[illegible]





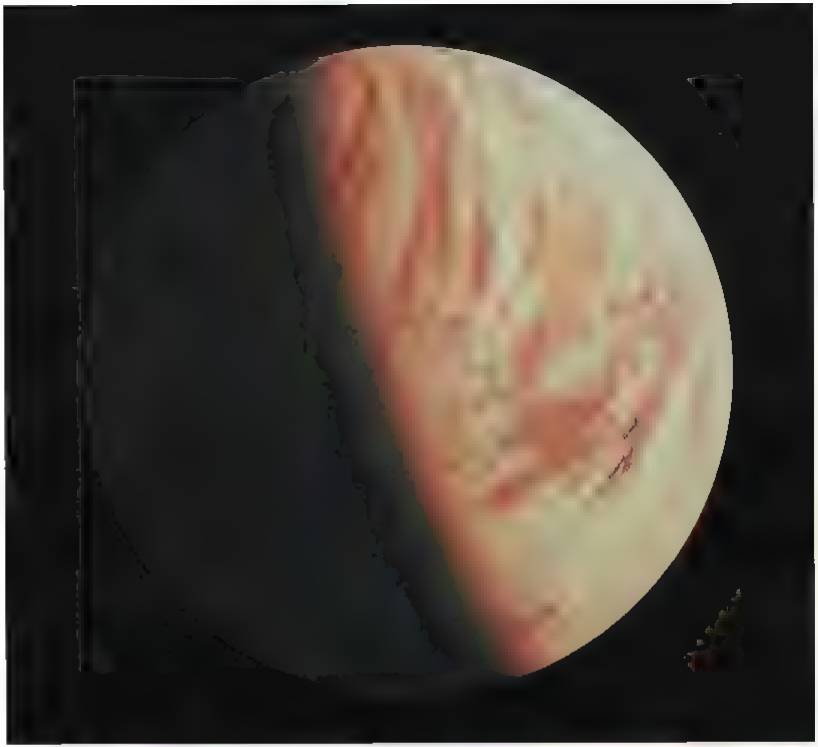






These Yavin matte paintings were really enhanced by color filtering. It made it a lot easier. I wondered if it was even my painting they responded to or had such a glow on it. They looked very good.

I love color. I like subtle color schemes that aren't really a daily breakdown of very saturated color. My mother told me I could name the colors before I could say anything else. I was interested in color before I can even remember anything else. — McQUARRIE



Matte painting, Yavin and moon, circa March 1976

The painting was done on [illegible] with the moon painted on one side and the planet Yavin on the other. The moon was painted separately so that it could be moved around to create different compositions. A piece of glass was then placed over the painting and the two elements were combined optically in the camera. The moon was then painted on a piece of glass and placed over the painting to create the final composite.

Storyboard by Joe Johnston, shot #178

Storyboard by Joe Johnston, shot #178A

Preliminary concept for matte painting, Yavin

Preliminary illustration for matte painting, Yavin

Matte painting, Yavin surface

The painting was done on a piece of glass that was mounted in front of the camera. The glass was then painted with a variety of textures and colors to create the surface of Yavin.

Matte painting, Yavin, circa March 1976

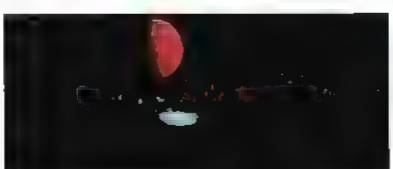
The painting was used to create the [illegible] in the film. The painting was composited with a live-action shot of the Falcon flying over the surface of Yavin.

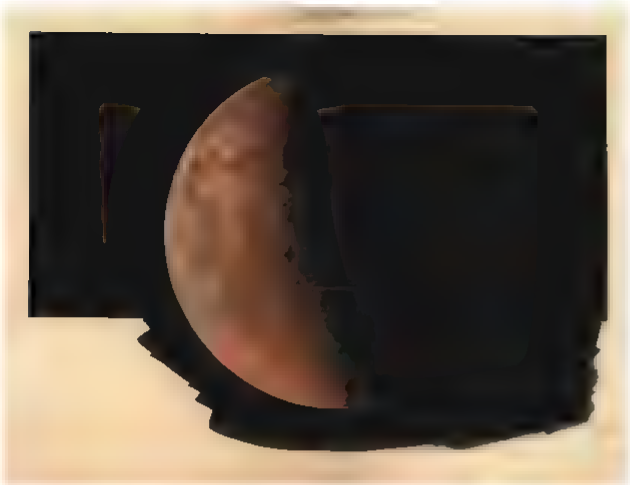
Final frame, the *Falcon* approaching Yavin

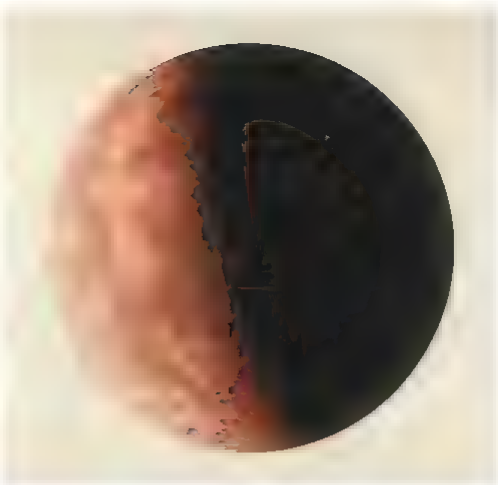
A [illegible] was used to create the [illegible] effect of the Falcon flying over the surface of Yavin.

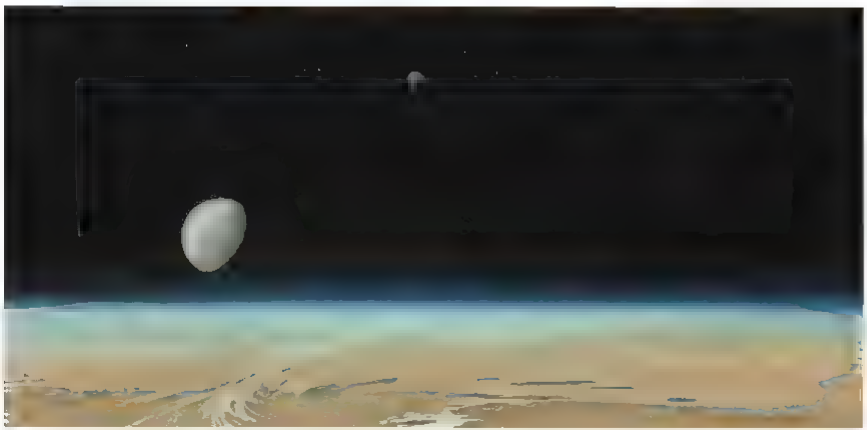
Final frame, the *Falcon* under Yavin headed toward the fourth moon

This is the [illegible] of the matte painting. The [illegible] was composited with the live-action footage of the Falcon flying over the surface of Yavin.









"The opening shot of the movie my matte painting of the surface of Tatooine looking over the horizon. That was [illegible] the first matte painting I did." McQUARRIE

Preliminary illustration for matte painting, Tatooine complete planet

Matte painting, Tatooine complete planet circa April 1976

[illegible]

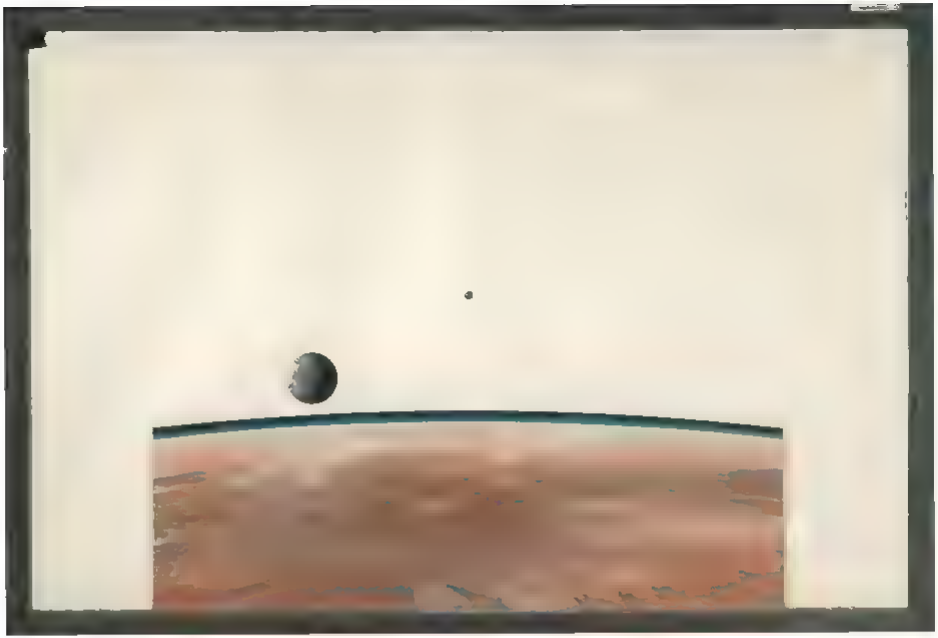
Preliminary illustration for matte painting, Tatooine horizon

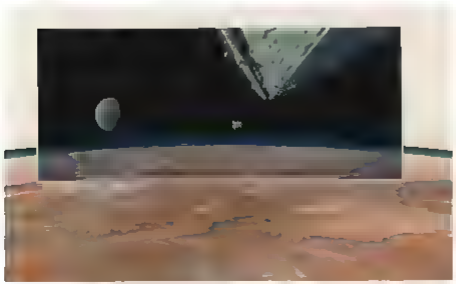
Matte painting, Tatooine horizon, circa early April 1976

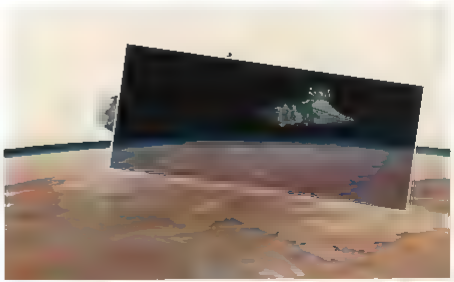
[illegible]

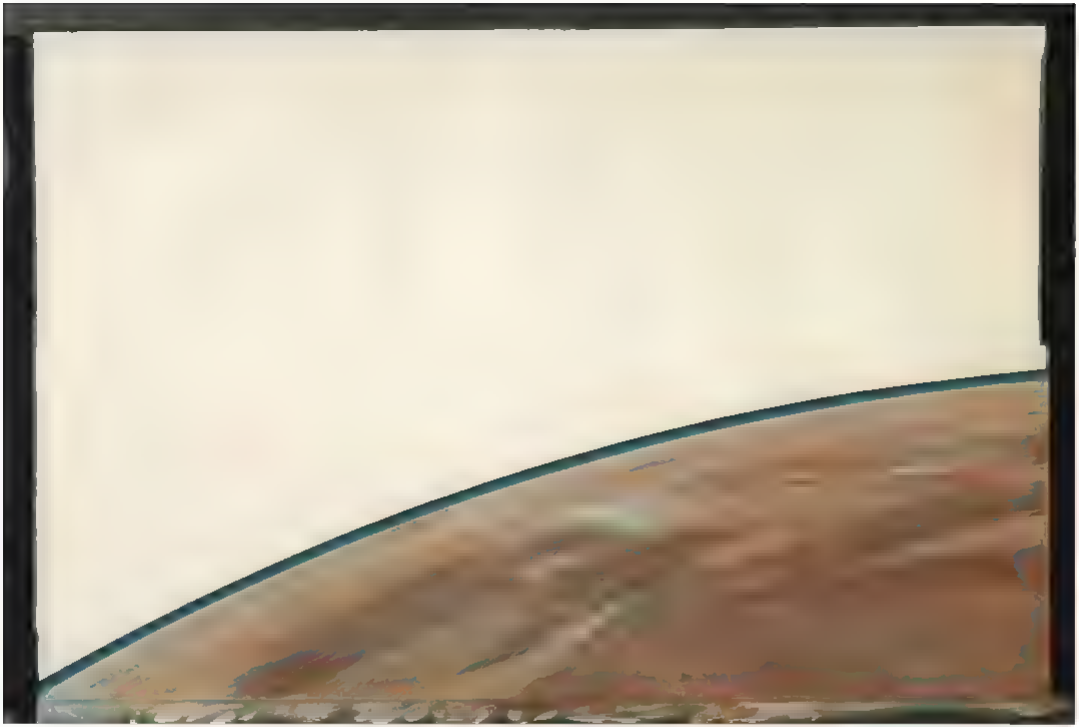
Final frames, Star Destroyer pursuing Tantive V over Tatooine

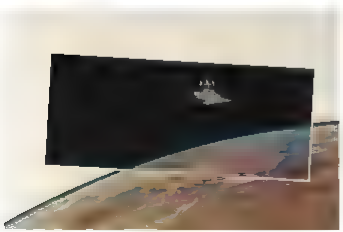
[illegible] Detail from matte painting, Tatooine horizon, circa early April 1976

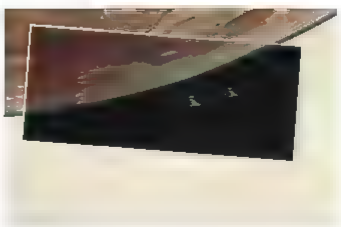


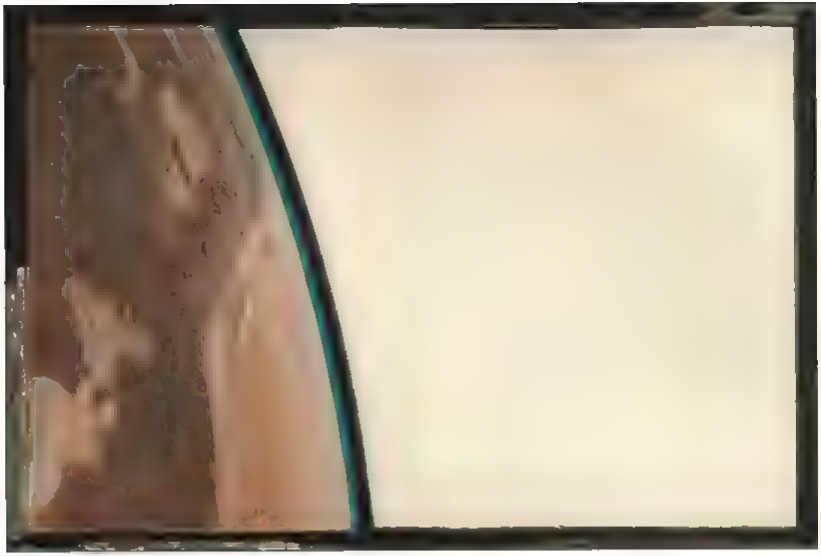


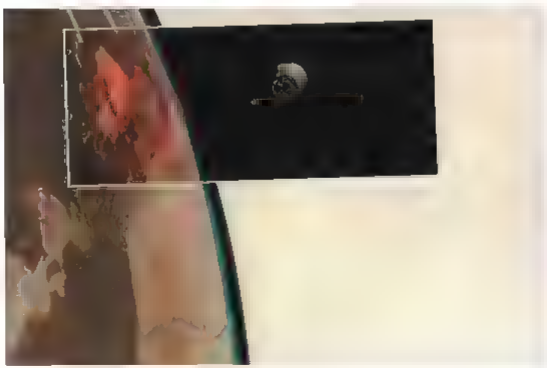












Matte painting, Tatooine, April 24, 1976

[illegible]

4 Final frame, Star Destroyer over Tatooine

Final frame, the *Falcon* leaving Tatooine

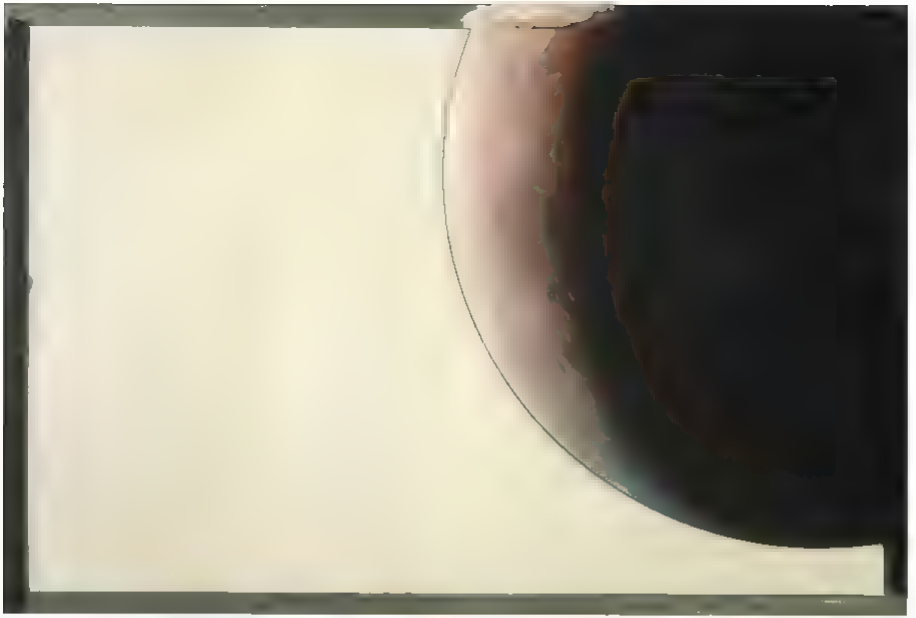
Final frame, two Star Destroyers pursue the *Falcon* over Tatooine

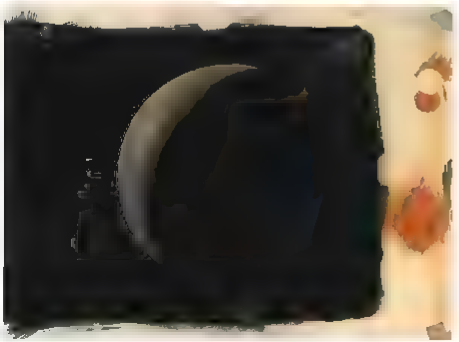
5 Matte painting, Tatooine, April 29, 1976

[illegible]

6 Final frame, escape pod jettisoning toward Tatooine

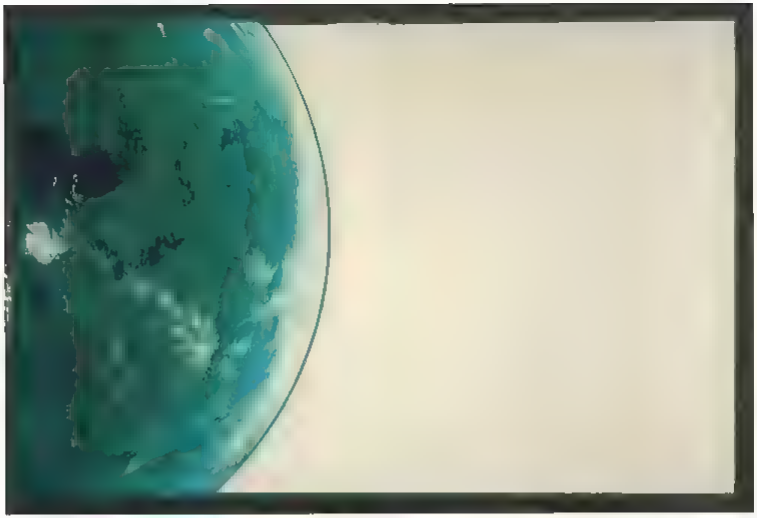
Airbrushed photograph key art, the *Falcon* over Tatooine

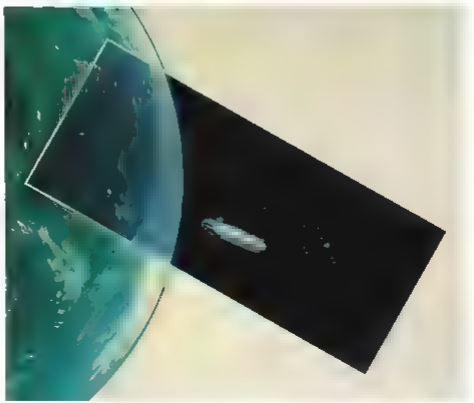


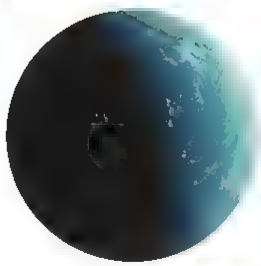


"Ralph's technique for painting planets featured a curved perspective that makes them appear spherical on a flat piece of glass. By choosing not to use fill light, he creates a more realistic universe, rather than a fantasy-type world—an influence from *2001: A Space Odyssey*." **BARRON**

"No matter how far outside the galaxy you go, there's going to be spherical planets—you're not going to run into a square one. And the surface of a sphere that's big enough to look like a flat horizon has that Earth-like feel to it. It's based on Earth's reality, so there's a lot of things we're familiar with, like certain laws of physics that can't be defied." **MCQUARRIE**







1 Matte painting, Yavin in shadow, circa March 1976
This painting was inspired by the new Star Wars logo. Striking resemblance to Mesopotamian glyphs existing. It was presumably given to Ralph by Lucas and is on board as Yavin with the sun in fairly realistic position.

Preliminary illustration for matte painting, Yavin (or Tatooine) in shadow

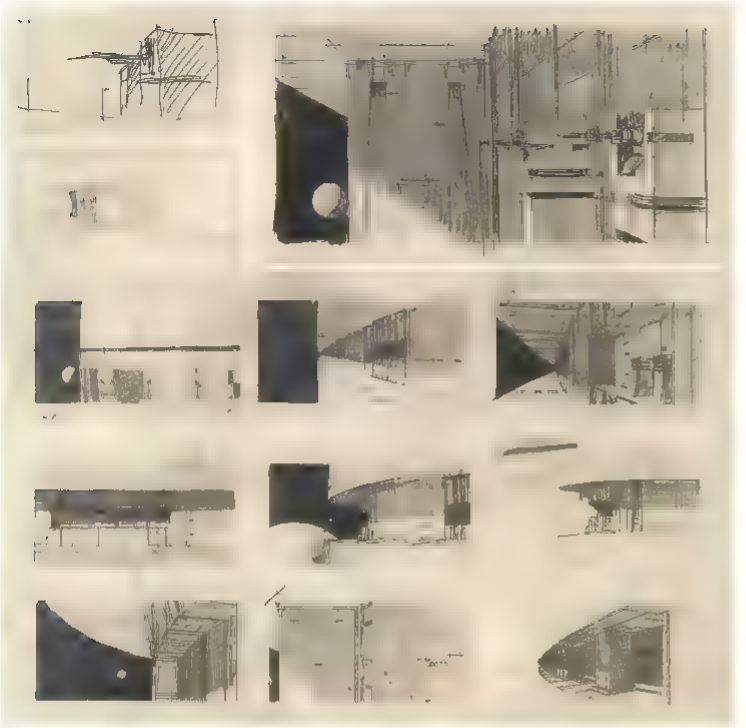
3 Final frame, Yavin with a distant Death Star

4 Matte painting, Fourth moon of Yavin, April 30, 1976

5 Final frame, the *Falcon* approaching fourth moon of Yavin

6 Final frame, Y-wing approaches fourth moon of Yavin

Matte painting, Fourth moon of Yavin, circa early November 1976
Perhaps the smallest [sic] U.S. [sic] Matte painting this piece [projected] a circle [sic] [illegible] diameter.



"The docking trench was set back because I felt it would be more interesting than just holes on the side of a ship. We looked this point of view and we decided there should be a camera position here and maybe it would be more interesting to have people in the foreground to give a better scale. So we matted in some actual actors." MCQUARRIE

"On the first *Star Wars* film, Ralph brought his paintings to ILM to be photographed on stage as there wasn't yet a proper matte department with a dedicated camera. 'The *Falcon* arriving at the Death Star' is an amazingly small and detailed painting. The size of it was based more on what was practical to haul around in his car." BARRON

"For me there is not very much difference between a matte painting and doing a production painting, because my natural painting style is to be pretty realistic. I did the mechanical things pretty well, I thought; I did the best I could. I did not want to make a career out of matte painting, and I didn't." MCQUARRIE

1 Thumbnail sketches, Death Star docking trench

2 Thumbnail sketch, Death Star docking trench

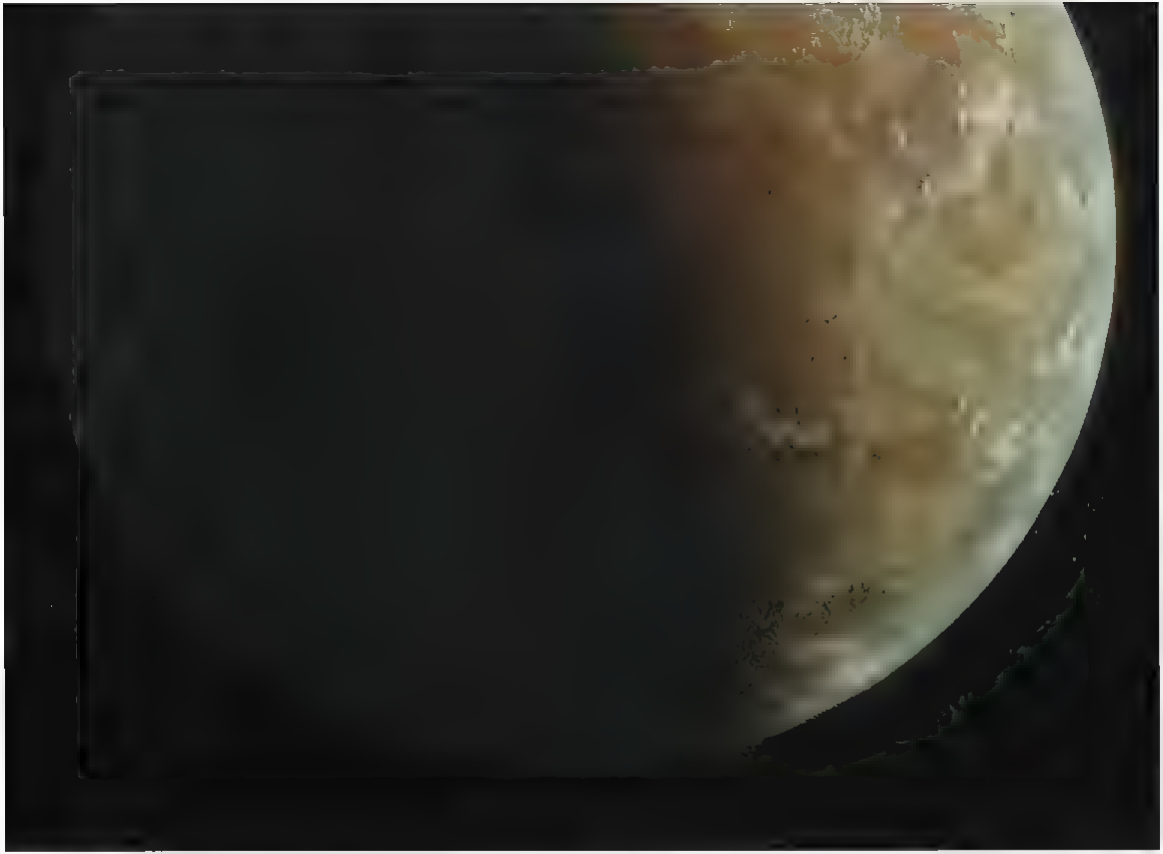
Drawing for matte study illustration (photocopy), "Death Star Docking Trench #2"

4 Production illustration, "Death Star Docking Trench #2"

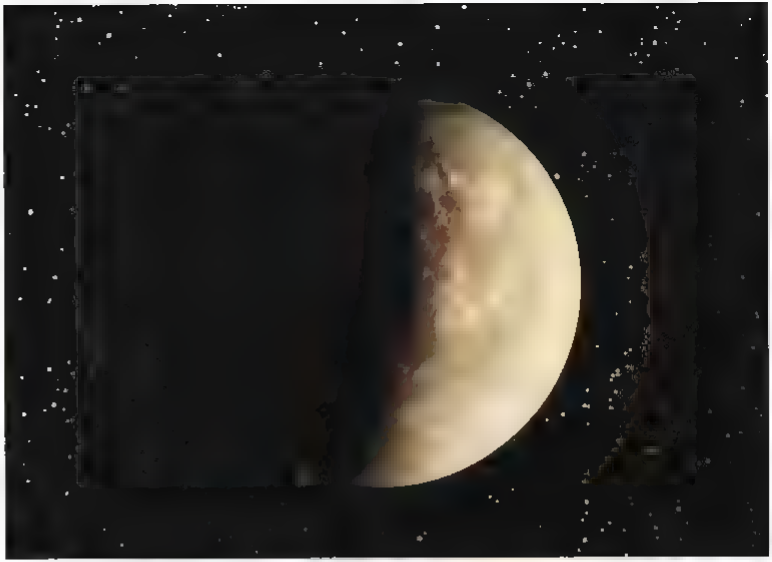
5 Production illustration (with painted overlay), "Death Star Docking Trench #2"
This piece is sometimes considered a production painting as it is similar in size and finish quality to McQuarrie's production paintings, the piece was actually done as a preliminary work to his "Death Star Docking Trench #2" [7] matte painting

6 Final frame, the *Falcon* entering Death Star docking trench

7 Matte painting, "Death Star Docking Trench #2," September 2, 1976
This is one of the few matte paintings that were on glass rather than glass



Preliminary illustration for matte painting, Alderaan



Ralph did the planet that blows up. Alderaan was about eight inches in diameter and it was a beautiful little painting of the planet done on a thick illustration board. . . and we put double-face tape on the back and we stuck it on a piece of glass and we shot a little camera move on it . . . I remember we tried to get it off, but the tape had really bonded to the glass on the process of me trying to get it off. The thing was starting to crumble and I was freaking out. We had put some very thick impasto-like paint for the cloud cover, and it was the first thing that started to chip off. That was a nightmarish moment."

KEN RALSTON, ASSISTANT VISUAL EFFECTS CAMERAMAN

3 Final frame. Tarkin contemplates Alderaan's destruction

The top of the Alderaan painting was clipped when composited into this shot.

3 Planet illustration (from transparency), Alderaan painting (heavy shadow)

Alderaan painted on different scale than Alderaan for the film. The painting is seen only wide shot of the death star control room.

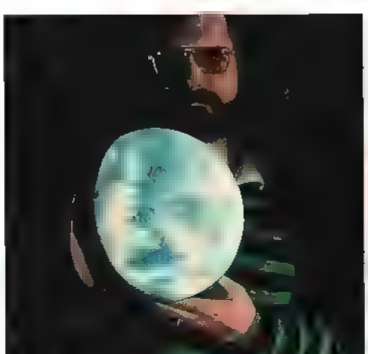
4 Planet illustration (from transparency), Alderaan (light shadow)

Pale moon close seen in the Ralph Mc. matte painting. Alderaan done on matteline board. The painting of Alderaan was used to get color, shading, etc. information of the planet, and is impossible as reference for the painted planet elements.

5 Final frame. Alderaan seen from Death Star control room

The Alderaan painting was clipped in the final film.

6 Final frame, Death Star firing on Alderaan



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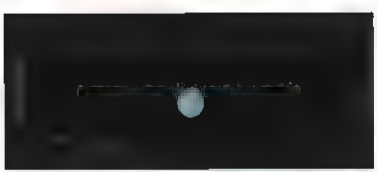

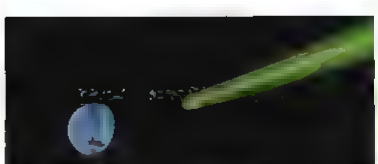

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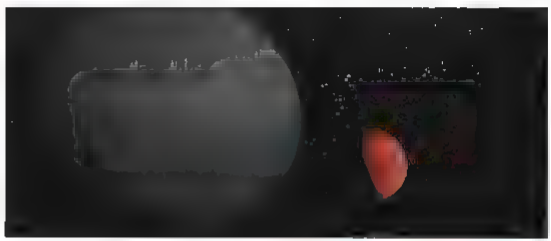


MODEL MAKING

RALPH MCQUARRIE'S ART STYLE ABILITIES were not confined to two-dimensional media. In his spare time he enjoyed building model ships and aircraft. Though McQuarrie never built models for the *Star Wars* films, he painted one of the saga's most memorable model miniatures: the Death Star. "Ralph had a ready been doing matte paintings for the Death Star attack sequences, so it was decided that it would be easier to match the model to the work Ralph had already done," says effects illustrator and designer Joe Johnston. "He used the same water-based Cel Vinyl paint on the model that he used in the matte paintings so the colors would all match. The Death Star in a... its different permutations was much more an environment than a model like the various ships. Ralph incorporated an amazing amount of... me-consuming detail into the painted model."

McQuarrie approached the physical model in the same manner he had his prior flat paintings of the Empire's massive space station. "The guys at ILM had Plexiglas semispheres made and put them together, you could see what we call the trench formed by the joining, and they cut out a dish for the antennas," recalled McQuarrie. "They gave the sphere to me, and I had it in my garage for three or four days while I painted all these little details on there. I put tape on for some texture, matted off some areas with tape, and sprayed to give it that textured look like the Death Star surface. I punched a lot of little holes with a #11 X-Acto knife for the lights and put a light bulb inside of it. We photographed it with the motion control camera, and it looked pretty good."

Always a fan of machinery, McQuarrie built models recreationally his whole life, but he rarely had an opportunity to do so in a professional capacity. "I love to build models. And I've never really had a chance to do it on films," he said. "I'd like to. I've often thought, too, if I could do this model, I know I can make it work like instead of making matte paintings of that city, I think I could have done a better thing with a model."

As with his artwork, McQuarrie's modeling skills were formidable. "After Ralph was no longer working at ILM regularly, he would still come by to visit or to do some business," recalls model builder Steve Gawley. "He would always come through the model shop and we would talk. He was kind of a closet model maker—I remember one time he brought in a box and in it was a World War II airplane, completely scratch-built. It was beautiful. I remember saying, 'Hey, Ralph, there's a bench open. We'd love to have you here.' But he never took us up on it."

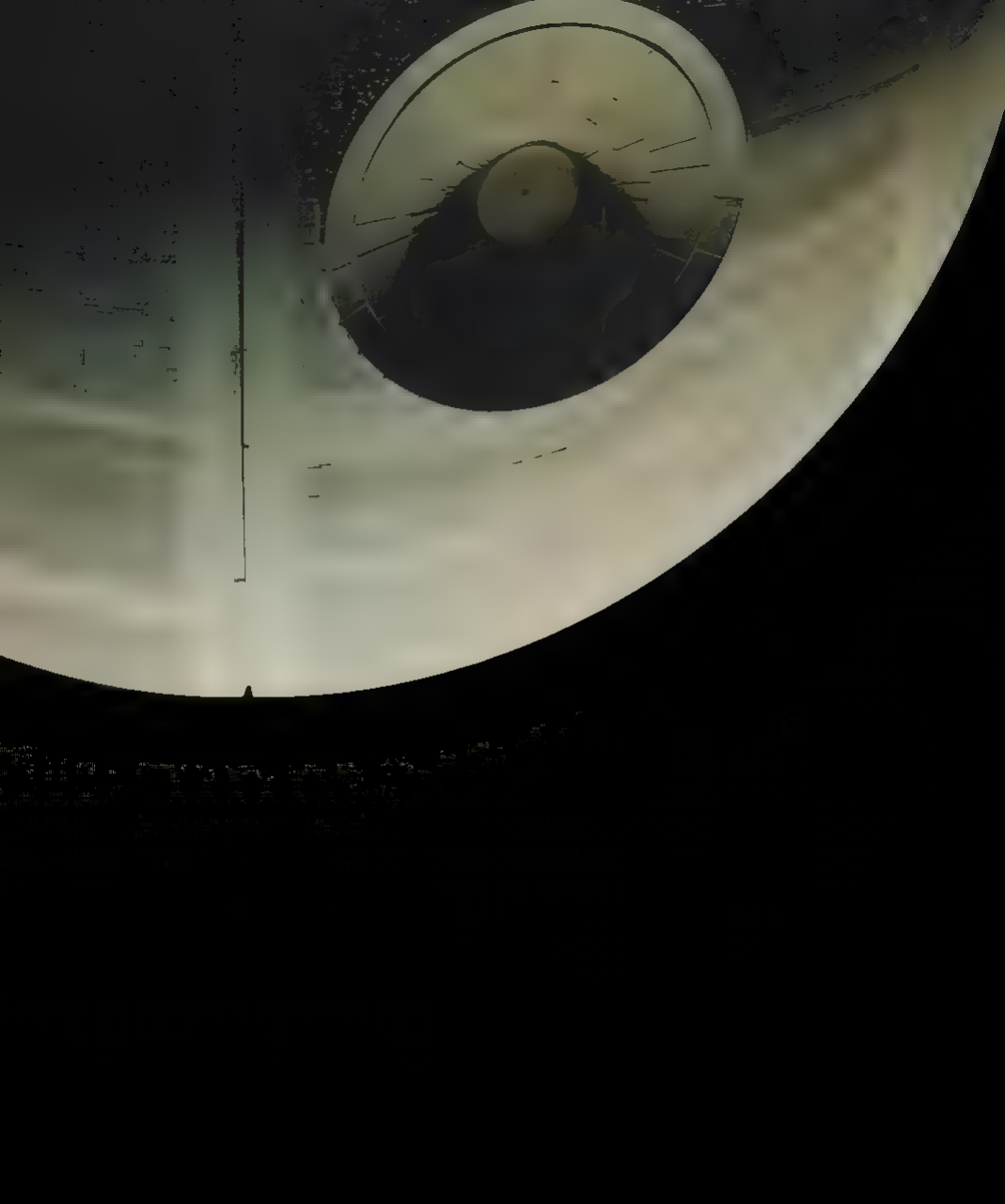
Assistant visual effects cameraman Ken Ralston checks the exposure on the model

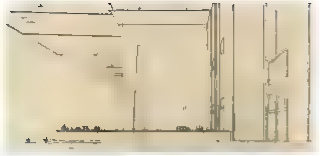
Film frame: Star Destroyer approaching Death Star

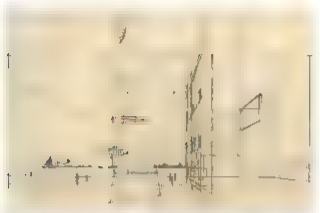
Film frame: Death Star approaching Yavin

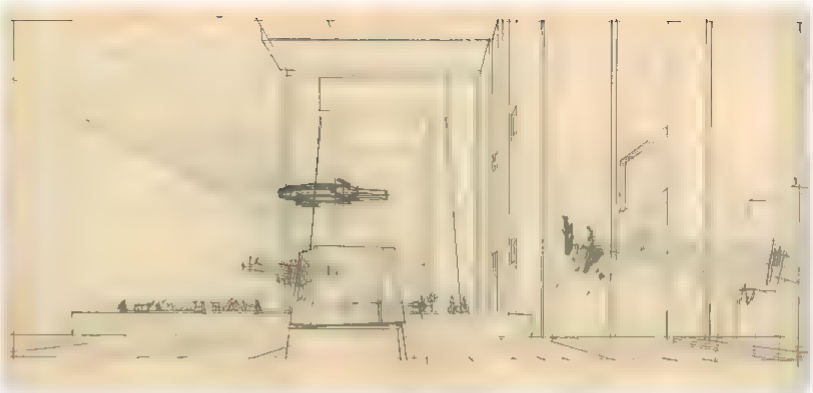
[illegible] Model miniature: Death Star, November 12–December 23, 1976

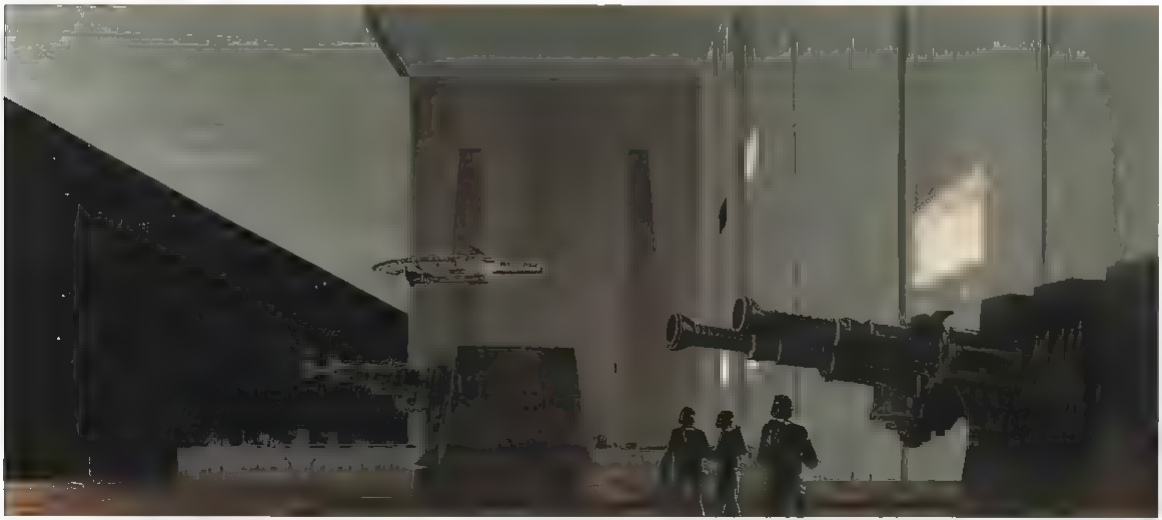
[illegible]











a

Drawings for matte study illustration, "Death Star Docking Trench #2"

a Production illustration, "Death Star Docking Trench #2," circa December 1976

We the main docking trench, a little piece the scope. #3. This illustration was done as a concept for a matte painting.

b Preliminary for matte study illustration, "Death Star Docking Trench #2"

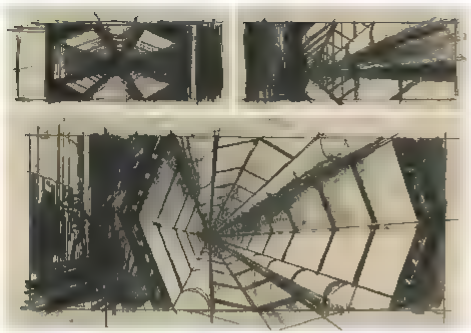
b Matte painting (from transparency), "Death Star docking trench #2," December 30, 1976

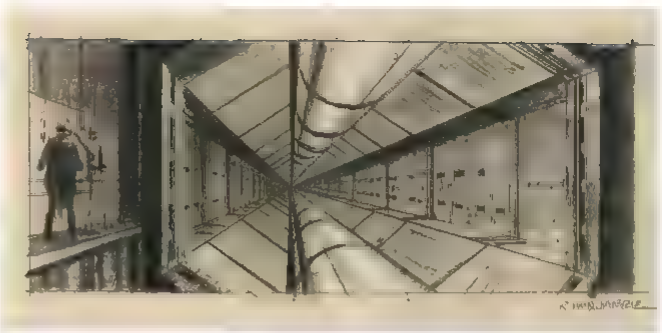
Ralph McQuarrie found the matte painting closely on the production illustration [a]. The differences were mostly

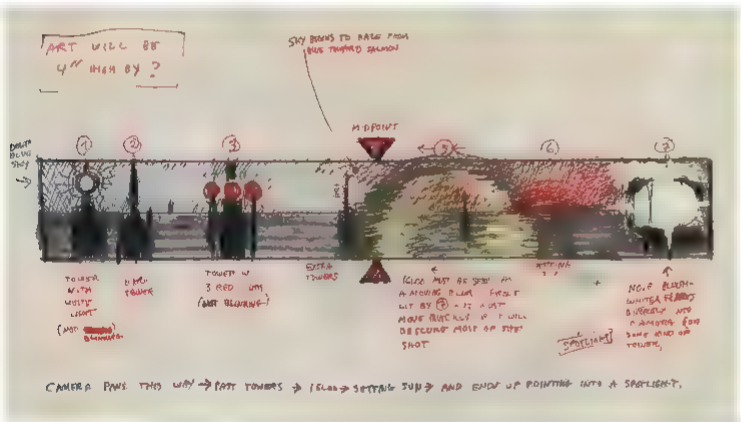
Final frame: the *Falcon* entering Death Star docking bay

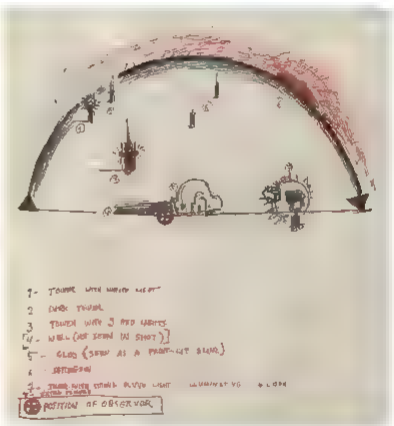
"The greatest sales tool this film ever had was Ralph McQuarrie's production paintings. In my mind."

HARRISON ELLENSHAW, MATTE PAINTING SUPERVISOR






ART WILL BE 4" HIGH BY ?
SKY BEING TO RACE FROM BLUE THROUGH SALMON
MIDPOINT
CAMERA PANS THIS WAY → PAST TOWERS → ICLES → SETTLES SUN → AND END UP POINTING INTO A SPOTLIGHT.



Thumbnail sketches, Death Star laser tunnel

Concept sketch, Death Star laser tunnel

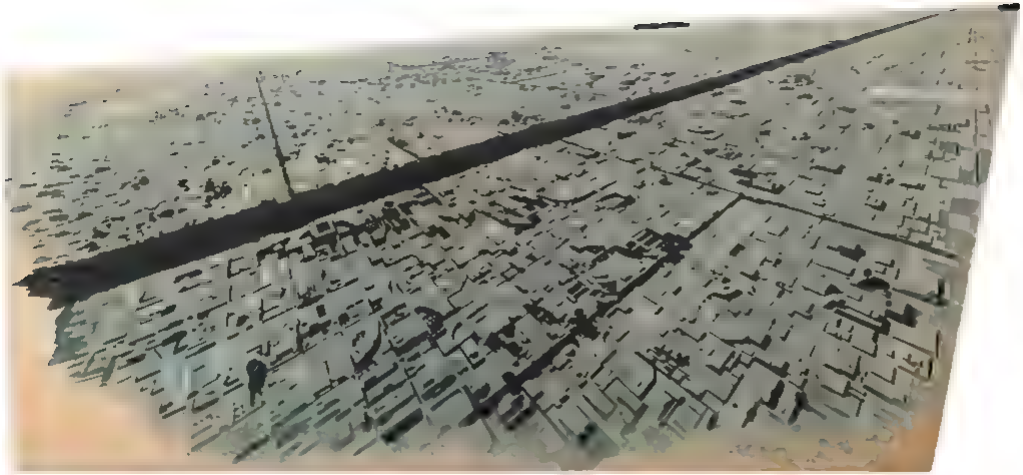
Concept sketches by unknown artist, macrobinocular shot concept

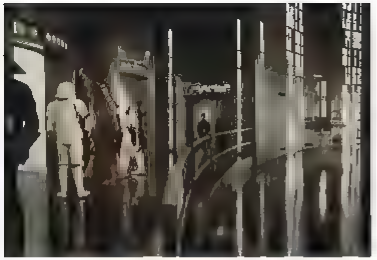
Background painting, macrobinocular shot of Tatooine, circa early 1977

Final frames, Luke's macrobinoculars point-of-view

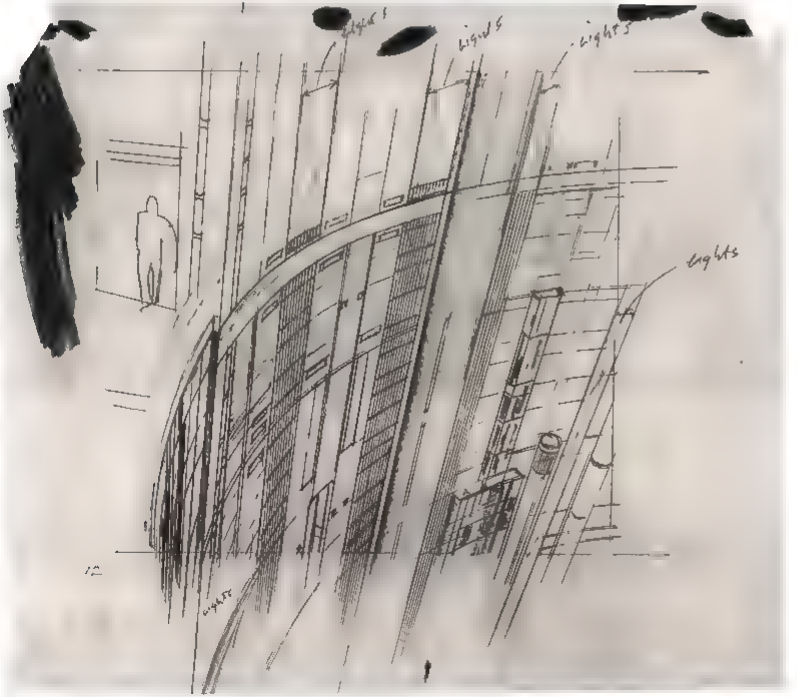
450

525





"He's real quiet, but he's really fun underneath. There's a whole bunch of stuff going on in his mind a all the time." JOHN DYKSTRA, SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC EFFECTS SUPERVISOR, STAR WAR



Production still, Death Star elevator se

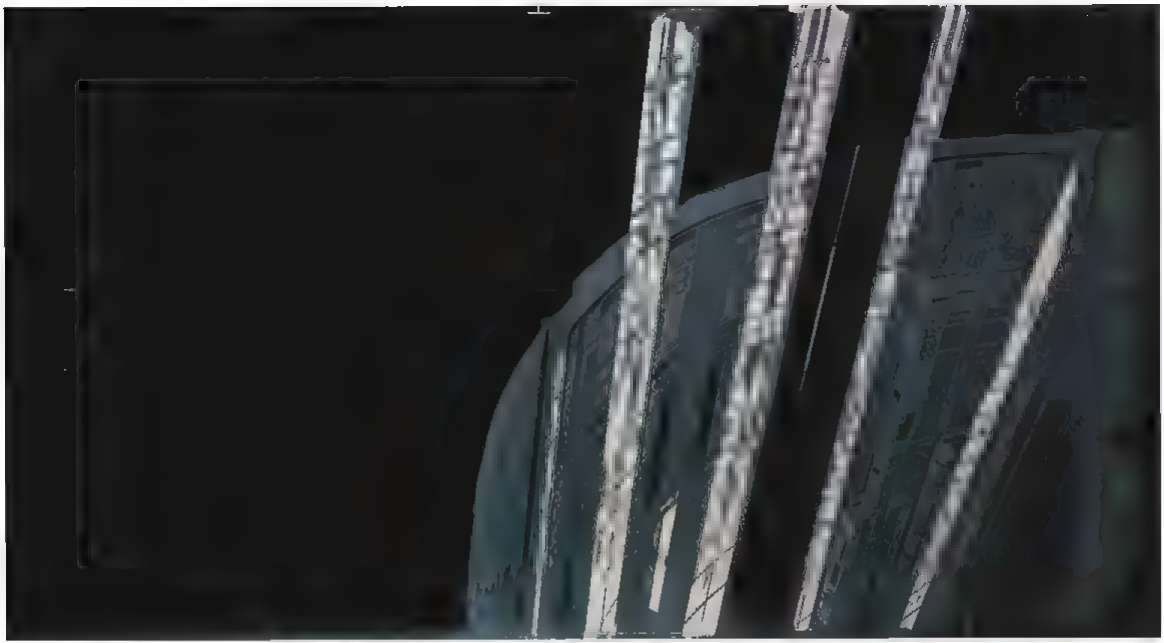
Ralph McQuarrie transfers elements of the Death Star elevator matte painting

Drawing for matte painting (photocopy), Death Star elevator

Matte painting, Death Star elevator, February 7 1977

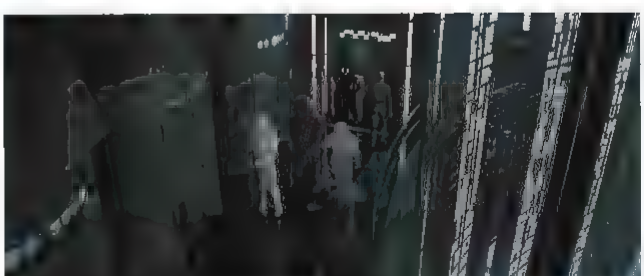
Matte painting set, painted by Mr. Joseph Mc... Signed by the artist, detail

Film frame, Death Star elevator shaft



"When I first met Ralph he had already started on a couple of the planet paintings and the one where they are waiting for the elevator and you see down the side. Ralph started the painting and I completed it. This one was shot bi-pack method, a means of combining elements by loading a camera with two strips of film together that are developed that contains part of the image, and one unexposed. The disadvantage here is you cannot reduce the plate, you have to live with what you have. The quality sometimes is not as good. Ultimately it came out fine.

"On Star Trek the matte work was largely a matter of copying what was already on the set. In other words, you take what Harry's set and you put it down here. So there wasn't a lot of discussion of what should be there and what shouldn't be there." ELLENSHAW



ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHY

Ralph McQuarrie had done some sketches, and George picked out one that he liked very much [illegible] cantina pickup shoot]. It's the white, spider-[illegible] little thing, an[illegible]. RICK BAKER

Concept sketches, Cantina creatures
September 30 or November 4–5, 1976
[illegible]

11 **Concept sketch, Cantina creature head, circa**
September 30 or November 4–5, 1976
[illegible]

14 **Concept sketches, Cantina creatures, circa**
September 30 or November 4–5, 1976
[illegible]

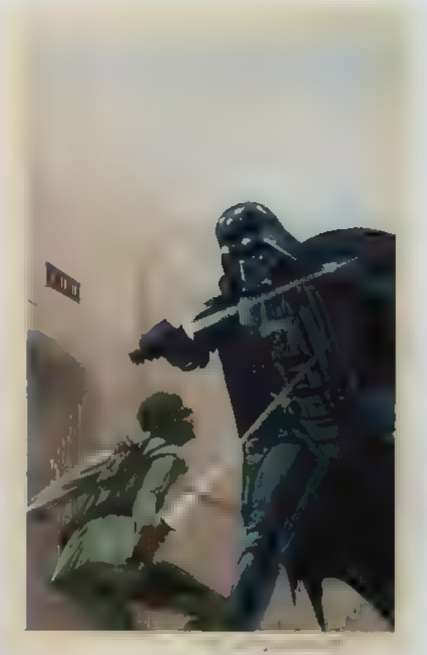
20 **Concept sketch, Cantina creature, circa**
September 30 or November 4–5, 1976
[illegible]

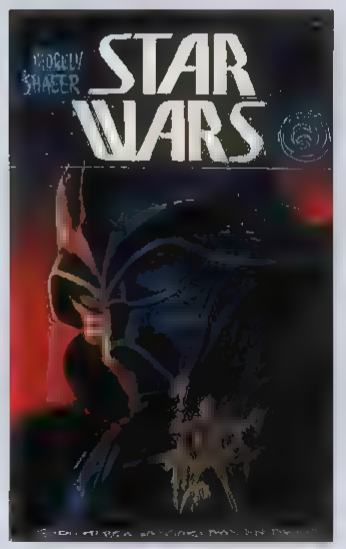
NOVELIZATION

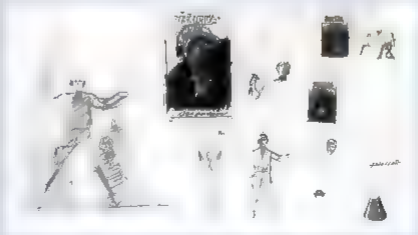
"I did an illustration for the cover of the novelization when it came out, with a big head of Darth Vader in the background and little figures of the heroes in the foreground. As for the helmet, I just continued to modify my original ideas; I modified it again in that illustration [3], and George looked at it and said it never looked better! He was kind of thinking back to the time when he was supervising the construction of the actual costume, and I think he thought he would like to have gone back and been able to change it to what I did for that cover." MCQUARRIE

When I first saw the cover [1] I was struck by not only how beautiful and dramatic it was, but it reminded me of Eyvind Earle and his work for Disney on *Sleeping Beauty*. A completely different subject matter obviously, but it had that kind of linear feel to it hard and steel. It's fascinating because it completely emphasizes the bad guy, it's like if you are doing a poster for *Frankenstein* nobody's really interested in Victor Frankenstein, just in the monster. It's the same thing with *Star Wars*. As soon as I saw Ralph's rendering I also immediately thought of the German knights in *Alexander Nevsky*, without knowing that George had been influenced by it. It's funny how these things come together.

"Ralph's piece was used on the first printing of the first paperback and subsequent to that they went to a John Berkey cover. I was sorry that the first hardcover didn't have Ralph's painting on it, but that was obviously the studios decision." ALAN DEAN FOSTER, HOW WE DID *STAR WARS* NOVELIZATION







Preliminary illustration, *Star Wars* novelization cover

Thumbnail sketches, *Star Wars* novelization cover

Concept sketches, *Star Wars* novelization cover

4 Preliminary illustrations, *Star Wars* novelization cover

Drawing for illustration, *Star Wars* novelization cover

Cover illustration, *Star Wars* novelization, July 28–31, 1976

Color paint with painted type overlay, *Star Wars* novelization cover

Star Wars novelization cover (published December 1976)

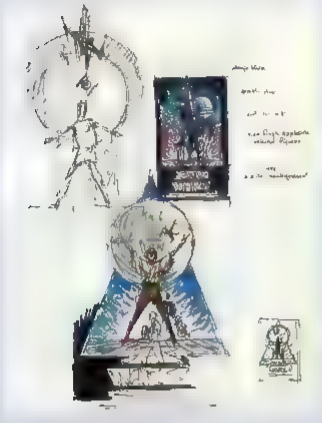
STAR WARS

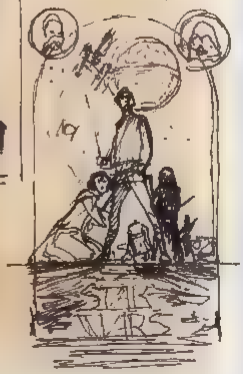
GEORGE LUCAS
STAR WARS

GEORGE LUCAS
STAR WARS
LUKE SKYWALKER

T-SHIRT ART

ONE-SHEET CONCEPTS





Concept sketches, *Star Wars* crew T-shirt illustration

3 Thumbnail sketches, *Star Wars* crew T-shirt illustration

Preliminary illustration (photocopy), *Star Wars* crew T-shirt

Illustration, *Star Wars* crew T-shirt
August 22, 1976

7 Thumbnail sketches, *Star Wars* poster

9 Concept sketches, *Star Wars* poster
February 10–25, 1977

STAR
WARS

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WARS

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WARS

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WARS

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WARS

We asked Ralph to take a stab at doing a sketch of a piece of poster art ... it wasn't really finished art, just something to show ... at this time, but Fox didn't want to make a decision about the poster then ... was too early. When the time did arrive to actually come up with a piece of poster art, they wanted to use more conventional artists that they had available. KURTZ

1 Preliminary illustration, *Star Wars* poster, February 20–25, 1977
For Star Wars ... Ralph McQuarrie painted ... illustration[s] ... [for] the studio. At ... [one] ... [the] ... [was] ... [the] Monster ...

2 Preliminary illustrations, *Star Wars* novelization cover (see pages 268–69)
While ... was working ... [on] the ... [novelization] ... [by] ... [Alan] Dean Foster, ... [the] ... [publishing] ... [house] ... [had] ... [the] ... [poster] ... [artist] ... [paint] ... [the] ... [book's] ... [cover] ... [art] ... [as] ... [well] ... [as] ... [the] ... [poster] ... [for] ... [the] ... [new] ... [film] ... [to] ... [be] ... [released] ... [in] ... [May] ... [1977].

3 Preliminary illustration, *Star Wars* poster, circa March 1977

5 Preliminary illustration (color photoprint) with painted type overlay and lower third, *Star Wars* poster, March 1976
A ... [version] ... [of] ... [the] ... [illustration] ... [and] ... [photo] ... [collage] ... [that] ... [Kurtz] ... [and] ... [Lucas] ... [worked] ... [on] ... [in] ... [Los] ... [Angeles] ... [in] ... [March] ... [1976]. For ... [some] ... [reason] ... [...] ... [was] ... [not] ... [used].

6 Preliminary illustration, *Star Wars* poster, circa March 1977
Lucas and Kurtz ... [were] ... [in] ... [London] ... [in] ... [March] ... [1977] ... [to] ... [oversee] ... [the] ... [production] ... [of] ... [the] ... [film's] ... [special] ... [effects] ... [and] ... [to] ... [work] ... [with] ... [the] ... [film's] ... [publicity] ... [department] ... [on] ... [the] ... [marketing] ... [of] ... [the] ... [film]. ... [One] ... [of] ... [the] ... [posters] ... [that] ... [was] ... [produced] ... [during] ... [their] ... [visit] ... [was] ... [this] ... [illustration].

STAR
WARS

MERCHANDISING

WHILE *STAR WARS* BROUGHT GLOBAL FAME to many of Ralph McQuarrie's designs, it was the tie-in merchandise that introduced the artist himself to a generation of movie fans. Prior to the film's release very few licensees were interested in manufacturing *Star Wars* products. That changed with the film's unexpected and unprecedented box-office success; 20th Century-Fox and Lucas looked at merchandising opportunities as a way to capitalize on the public's interest. The late start meant a need to create product as quickly as possible. "It was months and months before we got a toy company interested, and the lead time for toy companies was huge," producer Gary Kurtz recalls. "Whereas with paper products and other things like T-shirts—they could be produced quickly and there wasn't very much cost involved. We decided to do several things, including a portfolio of Ralphs art. The toys did not come out until seven or eight months later, so for a long time the only thing that was out there were paper products like the portfolio, the novelization, and the comic books."

The Star Wars Portfolio by Ralph McQuarrie contained twenty-one prints of "superb production paintings from the greatest space fantasy film ever made!" It was released in September 1977, a mere four months after the film's release. Each print was accompanied by a caption written by director of publications Carol Wikarska (later Carol Titelman) based on her conversations with McQuarrie. As one of the only products available, it sold very well, despite some quality-control issues with the prints. (McQuarrie was brought in to oversee a revised print run of the portfolio after the first run suffered from bubbling ink troubles.)

While the portfolio was a product made up entirely of McQuarrie's work, the artist's first tie-in product had actually been released nearly a year earlier. *Star Wars: From the Adventures of Luke Skywalker*, the film novelization, was published December 1976 and featured a cover illustration by McQuarrie (see pages 160–61.) McQuarrie also provided the cover illustration for *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* (published February 1978; see page 169 [...]), the first spin-off novel in the *Star Wars* universe.

McQuarrie's art, along with that of colleagues John Barry, Joe Johnston, John Mollo, and others, was also featured in *The Art of Star Wars*. Publishing production artwork as a movie tie-in was an unusual thing at the time. While "Art of" books are common today, they were not at that time. *The Art of Star Wars* paired illustrations with interview content from McQuarrie, Johnston, and others—and gave fans an early look into the making of the film. Assistant editor Vaerie Hoffman worked with Carol Wikarska at the time and did a great deal of work on the book, including some of the layout. "I was just trying to get Ralph to keep talking because he knew every little detail about those paintings. If I pointed to one little thing, he had a reason for it," says Hoffman. "I had never interviewed anyone before. I was very nervous about it, but when I met him that vanished. I was just so interested in the stuff that he was talking about. I learned that there was a reason for everything in his paintings."

The Art of Star Wars was a more involved product to create than *The Star Wars Portfolio*, and it was not released until November 1979. Both products were created by Lucasfilm's publishing division, headed by Wikarska.

Based on the success of the original, McQuarrie knew as he was designing for the sequel, films that some of the work would later be published. McQuarrie portfolios were indeed published for *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* as well, along with additional "Art of" books. McQuarrie felt it affected his approach to the work, and not always for the better. "I never thought the work would be published in art books," McQuarrie said. "The paintings were used in promotion, and then this movie made tons of money and all of the sudden it was a very important movie. We were all amazed. After that I had a whole different attitude about my paintings. 'Gee, they're gonna be reproduced. I better make them tighter.' And I kind of froze up for a little while. But after a couple of days I went right back to it, I just had to do away with all that business of 'it's an important thing. Because it doesn't help the paintings at all, or the designs."

While the publication of the work was intimidating for its creator, the portfolios and the *Art of* books had a positive impact on many interested in filmmaking, inspiring artists, designers, and filmmakers around the world. "Seeing *Star Wars* in 1977 changed my life," says Christopher Nolan, director of *Batman Begins*, *Interstellar*, and other films. "It cemented my desire to make films and hammered home the limitless possibilities of cinema for creating entire worlds of escapism and adventure. I owned many publications featuring McQuarrie's work. He demonstrated and defined the vital role that concept artists were to play in this brave new world of fantastic image making."

While the publishing aspect added pressure during the productions themselves, McQuarrie later looked back on that side of the work positively. "Judy Lynn Del Rey of Ballantine Books saw my illustrations, and she said she had one thought in mind: Money! She thought she could publish those and make money, and she did," he said. "The publications were a first, in a way. I had seen books on film before, but nothing quite like the art books for *Star Wars*. So I was very privileged to be a part of it. I don't think very many film designers have had the privilege of having a piece of full-color publishing done with each film they work on."

The Star Wars Portfolio by Ralph McQuarrie (published September 1977)

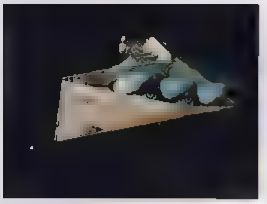
2 Concept sketch, *Star Wars* T-shirt

Drawing for illustration (photocopy), *Star Wars* T-shirt

Drawings for illustration, *Star Wars* T-shirt
McQuarrie's graphite transfer process is very apparent on (b).

Illustration, *Star Wars* T-shirt, circa January 1978
McQuarrie identified this as an illustration for an unrelated T-shirt. He referenced stills from the film for the characters and their costumes,

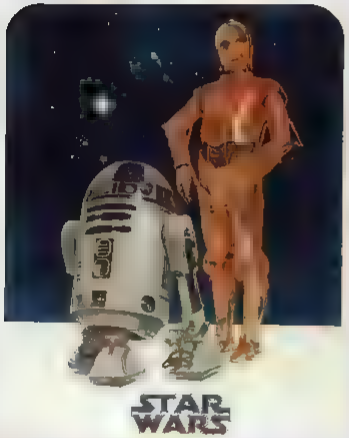
depicted on the Star Wars style "A" poster with artwork by Tom Jung.



"The *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* was handed to me as a cover assignment. I think I sent them just one idea, a little color sketch. There was a difference between doing a production illustration and doing a book cover. The book cover is going to be a static, linear by-product of the advertisement and the production painting is going to represent a frame of a scene in a film. Other than that, I am looking for the same kind of thing. I am looking for a first reaction, something that says to you in the picture and fixes a place so you understand what the whole painting is about without having to explain it.

"So for this one, there was a moment that came up somewhere in the book where Luke Skywalker confronted Luke Skywalker and Leia, and they were fighting for the Kaiburr crystal, this ruby-like gizmo. I was looking for a way to get the storm into the picture. I just decided that would float it in here as a color like a light, all with a little amount of glow as an attention-getting device. It seems to work pretty well, and they seemed to like it right away." McQUARRIE

"After the cover, Joe Fisher and Mark Harrison signed off on the use of their likenesses in future projects. I was blown away by how Ralph showed the two major characters on the stairway without showing their faces, and yet it still made an effective cover painting. It was a brilliant piece of work, the perfect illustration of the climactic scene." FOSTER, AUTHOR OF *THE MAGUS OF THE MIND'S EYE*



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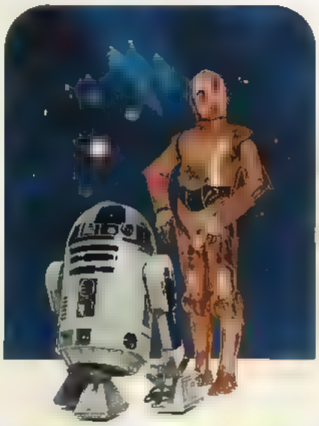

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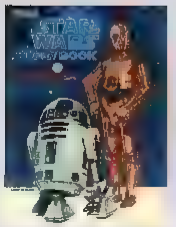


C

D

E

Composite key art photo with airbrushing by McQuarrie. Star Destroyer in pursuit.

Composite key art photo with airbrushing by McQuarrie. X-wing over Death Star surface.

Composite key art photo with airbrushing by McQuarrie. X-wings in flight.

Preliminary airbrush illustration, C-3PO and R2-D2 key art.

Airbrush illustration, C-3PO and R2-D2 key art.

Star Wars Storybook (published January 1978)

Poster (by Factors) featuring airbrushed photograph key art, Luke Skywalker.

Poster (by Factors) featuring airbrushed photograph key art, Princess Leia.

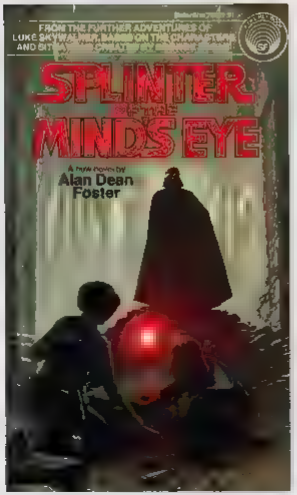
Poster (by Factors) featuring airbrushed photograph key art, Darth Vader.

Preliminary illustration with painted cape overlay, *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* novel cover, late 1977.

Splinter of the Mind's Eye paperback novel (published April 1978 following hardcover February 22, 1978, publication).

Illustration *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* novel cover, late 1977.

SPLINTER
OF THE
MIND'S EYE
ALAN DEAN FOSTER


FROM THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF
SPLINTER
OF THE
MIND'S EYE
A novel based on
Alan Dean
Foster

OFFICIAL STAR WARS FAN CLUB POSTER

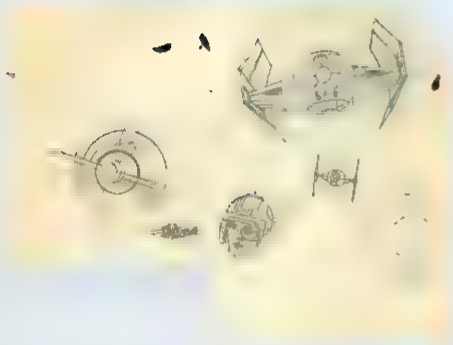
THE OFFICIAL *STAR WARS* FAN CLUB began in 1977, shortly after the release of *Star Wars*. The club was created to help manage the large volumes of fans who wrote in to the Lucasfilm offices with questions and requests. Uncredited publicist Craig Miller established the official Fan Club under the direction of Lucasfilm's Vice President of Advertising, Publicity, Promotion, and Merchandising, Charles Lippincott. Miller sought to create a membership kit as a reward for fans, which included things like McQuarrie's triangular logo sticker (see page 78 [3.1]), school book covers, and 8 × 10 color photos. In late 1977, Miller began working with McQuarrie on an exclusive Fan Club poster that would be included with membership kits beginning in early 1978. "I gave Charles Lippincott and George Lucas a list of what I thought we should do for the Fan Club," recalls Miller. "The poster came from my list of items."

"Ralph and I got together and I told him what I was looking for," he continues. "I pointed to one of his paintings from *Star Wars*—the X-wing flying away from us in the trench. I said I thought it would be really nice to turn that around and give it more action and make it more involved by having the ship fly toward us. I really liked that it would go out of frame and come straight off the page. To me, it really ramps up the action of the piece. I wasn't sketching or anything, I was just giving Ralph my ideas on it. And he absolutely delivered."

McQuarrie produced a study painting before moving on to the final version. "The study was a hotter image, with a lot of reds in it," says Miller. "It was a much more violent picture, and the final poster was a friendlier version of the same action. I think that worked better for something like a fan club poster. Especially one where the fan club had an age range from little kids to adults."

"Ralph was always friendly and very open. He was willing to work with me on it, so I was very pleased. I wasn't telling him to make something a darker blue, or anything specific. I was giving him general suggestions of what I wanted, and he was continually open to listening. He was extremely gracious."

The final poster artwork was approved by George Lucas before it shipped out to fans. The *Star Wars* Fan Club poster has a fond place in the hearts of fans and is today a highly sought-after collectible.



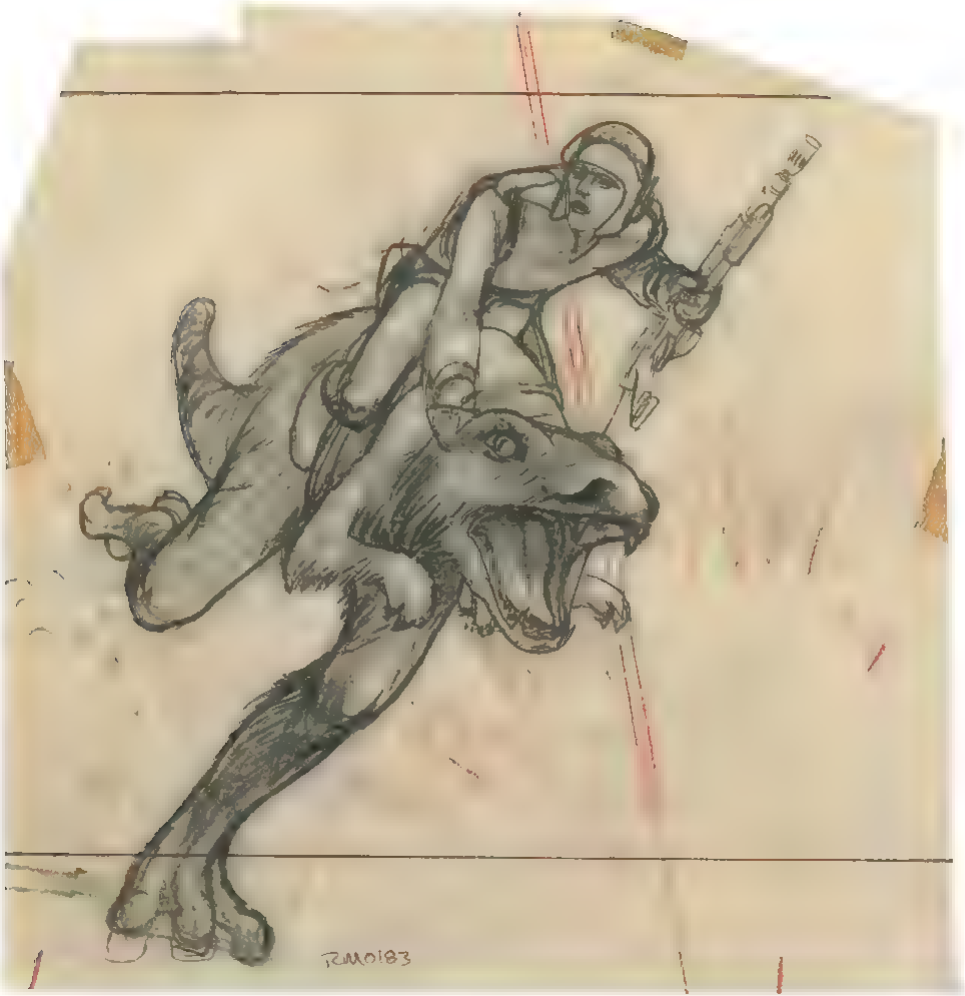
"It's a little busy. I would really like to see something more dominant in the painting." McQUARRIE

Preliminary illustration: X-wing in trench.
Official *Star Wars* Fan Club poster, December 1977

Drawing for illustration: X-wing underbelly

Drawing for illustration: TIE fighters and cave as pilot

Illustration: X-wing in trench. Official *Star Wars* Fan Club poster, December 1977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THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

PART I

THE ONE TO BEAT

McQUARRIE FOLLOWED UP HIS WORK on *Star Wars* with a series of other cinematic engagements. In addition to working on a never-realized *Star Trek* film, he designed the mothership for director Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and worked on producer Glen Larson's *Battlestar Galactica* television series, alongside much of the original ILM staff.

Lucas called McQuarrie about the untitled *Star Wars* sequel in July 1977, while the illustrator was in production on *Battlestar Galactica*. On September 14 and 21, McQuarrie met with Lucas at his offices on the Universal lot. By October 1 a contract was in place for McQuarrie to work as design consultant and conceptual artist on the sequel, and several days later he began the earliest *The Empire Strikes Back* concept sketches at his home in Los Angeles. Lucas would not complete a written story treatment until nearly two months later. "I started things before he finished the script, and George had a number of alternatives in mind," said McQuarrie. "George now had the time and money to see as many different things as we could do. It was all pretty mysterious at times. We didn't know exactly what was going to be used or how. I think the paintings somewhat served to help him make his decisions as to whether he really thinks he wants to put something in the film. They also help him while he's writing to kind of tour the possibilities in his mind. As he sees things, he can see how the story might unfold in those spaces we have created."

McQuarrie began meeting with Lucas regularly at his Universal office to review artwork and discuss ideas. "George had an office in one of those bungalows. They just had a small space and a Xerox machine. We met there every week or so," McQuarrie recalled. The pair collaborated in a manner similar to theirs on the first film, with Lucas providing general descriptions and McQuarrie developing different designs. The artist had a newfound sense of pressure from the success of the original film and the attention he knew the sequel would inevitably receive. "The second picture was a big deal. Everybody was waiting to see what it was going to be, and what I was going to do," McQuarrie said. "I wasn't as fresh, because the effort I would have liked to have spent on that kind of thing was already spent. I had also done stuff for *Star Trek* and *Battlestar Galactica*, which wasn't as much fun as *Star Wars*. So I was trying to get up a new piece of energy for the film. And it wasn't coming up so well. I just wasn't as full of enthusiasm, and most importantly, I was full of apprehension. 'Could I do the paintings as good?' That's not where good art comes from; the thought that 'I should be better than *Star Wars*.' It comes from just being there and with the ideas and the script and feeling that there's an adventure."

In November of the same year, fellow *Star Wars* veteran Joe Johnston joined the team and began working as visual effects art director from his home in North Hollywood. Lucas was in Los Angeles less frequently at this point, so McQuarrie and Johnston would meet at the Universal office to drop off art that would be sent north to Lucas's San Anselmo base via courier pouch. "Ralph and I would show each other what we were working on before we dropped the stuff off to production coordinator Miki Herman, who was then running the office and doing shipping and receiving from Universal to Marin County," says Johnston. "Sometimes we were working on the same thing, but often Ralph's work involved roughs for concept paintings and not so much individual designs. Although being the designer that he is, Ralph always refined designs as he incorporated them into the paintings, whether from his own sketches or mine." The pair was still finishing up work on *Battlestar Galactica* at the time. "[*Battlestar* writer and creator] Glen Larson's offices were only about two hundred feet from the Lucasfilm office. Neither Ralph nor I wanted Larson to spot us delivering artwork for the San Anselmo pouch. We started parking behind the Hitchcock theater and approaching the office from the east side, where we'd be hidden from view until we went up the stairs," admits Johnston.

Lucas completed the story treatment on November 28 and went into a story conference transcript session with writer Leigh Brackett for several days. "I like sitting down with my first encounter with the script and locking the door and making initial thumbnail sketches," McQuarrie said. McQuarrie completed his first production painting on December 7 and two days later met with Lucas to review the illustration and other designs.

Johnston continued design work from his home as well, and both of them continued working on designs for several months. "As ideas came up, both Joe and I submitted a lot of drawings for George to look at," McQuarrie said shortly before the film's release. "I would then go into making paintings now and then, when we seemed to have something well enough along. Joe continued to sketch, and we each narrowed down certain things. It seemed to be that if I returned something that worked, then I would start concentrating on that, and Joe might pick it up and add something to it. So the development was a joint thing between Joe Johnston and me. We're almost at the point now where George can look at our work and see some concept in it that isn't quite right, and he will ask us to switch assignments. It's not all that competitive, just complementary."

The process was far more collaborative than it had been on the first film, and McQuarrie enjoyed the creative energy. "A group project doesn't bother me," he said. "I'm happy working toward a common thing, with other people contributing. I like to be asked for my ideas, and I don't mind if someone says, 'We can't do it that way. If somebody else does it better, I say, 'Oh great, now I'll go work on something else and we'll call that done.' I feel I have things to contribute, obviously. It's much nicer to have that give-and-take thing and work toward a big project that other people are working on. If you're just by yourself, after a while it's a bit melancholy."

PAGE 373 Drawing for production illustration, tauntaun and rider (see page 354).

Ralph McQuarrie at an Elstree Studios drafting table, circa late 1978 or early 1979.

Not wishing to put himself through the struggles of directing another *Star Wars* film, Lucas selected a director—Irvin Kershner—in February 1978. Writer Leigh Brackett's screenplay was also completed that month, though it was not exactly what Lucas was looking for. He decided to tackle the next draft himself while searching for another writer to bring on board. Meanwhile, art concepts continued to be developed. Lucas and Kershner met with McQuarrie at the Beverly Hills Hotel on February 25, and the three of them reviewed McQuarrie's work to that point. Kershner had his own ideas for the picture, and the creative team effectively expanded.

In March, associate producer Jim Bloom began the process of moving Industrial Light & Magic to new premises in San Rafael. Lucas was now in a position to bring his effects facility north, as he intended to on the first film. Bloom began recruiting key *Star Wars* alumni, such as McQuarrie, Johnston, effects director of photography Dennis Muren, and visual effects co-supervisor Richard Edlund. On April 1, Lucas completed the second draft of the screenplay, which McQuarrie read the same week. He made the decision to relocate to northern California around the same time, and he never looked back. McQuarrie lived in Berkeley with his wife Joan McQuarrie for the rest of his life.

Lucas finally found his screenwriter in June. Lawrence Kasdan drew immediate inspiration from McQuarrie's work to date. "At the point we were writing, we didn't have sets or special effects to work from; it was sheer dreaming," says Kasdan. "We ran the risk of writing words and not really knowing what they meant physically. But one of McQuarrie's paintings would inevitably show up at that point and give us something to hang on to: 'Oh yeah. Now I see.' Many times, they gave us ideas about where to take the action as well. I would say one of the key factors that stoked us all during the creation of the script was his paintings."

"Ralph's stuff gave us really good discussion points because we could put them up on the walls and talk about them from a practical point of view," says producer Gary Kurtz. "Even if they actually weren't the story the film ended up as, they were clearly helpful."

Norman Reynolds, the art director who stepped into John Barry's shoes as production designer, had his first *Empire* film meetings in San Rafael at the end of June, when he traveled to the US production offices along with associate producer Robert Watts. A series of meetings took place over three days with all the key personnel, including Ralph McQuarrie. While McQuarrie felt he made one of the largest contributions to the design of the prior film, he never considered becoming a production designer. "The work that I did for *Star Wars* represents, I think, what I can do for films," McQuarrie said. "I don't think that I would be so terribly interested in getting into film as a production designer. I just didn't want that problem of being a manager of a crew. I'm a person who gets very uneasy when I have to deal with a lot of people. I want to be an artist, not a general manager."

McQuarrie read the third draft of *The Empire Strikes Back* in August. The ILM team also expanded the same month, with the addition of assistant art director Nilo Rodis-Jamero, stop-motion animator Phil Tippett, and others. McQuarrie's artwork served the same role for ILM that it had on the first film—inspiration. "During the course of shooting *Empire*, stuff would come in, and any time we saw a new piece it just got us all very excited at the possibility of what the movie was going to try and be," recalls visual effects cameraman Ken Ralston. "Early on you never know, but you see these images and go, 'Wow, that's Cloud City. That's kind of cool.' All these different things would kind of get your juices flowing and for the whole ILM facility, not just myself."

New artwork had continued to flow from both McQuarrie and Johnston throughout the summer of 1978. Rodis-Jamero, a highly talented designer in his own right, quickly settled in as Johnston's understudy. "In the beginning, both Joe and I were working at George's Park Way house," says Rodis-Jamero. "Ralph used to come in every two or three weeks. Ralph being Ralph, he would glide in and glide out, and speak very softly about things he was working on. 'I don't know if this is right' but I was thinking along these lines,' he would say. And then he presented us with a sketch that for Joe or I would have been a final rendering. And we would look at it and just be floored." *Empire* was Rodis-Jamero's first film, and he was suitably impressed with the veteran illustrator. "The difference between Ralph and Joe and I is that we would never frame our design sketches. All of my sketches were loose," Rodis-Jamero says. "Ralph tends to focus. His paintings are already framed in that Panavision format. He sets the world in a movie frame, whereas I designed in little pieces. When Ralph comes in, he forces a view that is almost super-finished early on, and you can tell his artwork is really thought out. Ralph is a film designer because he puts it in a frame. I believed what was inside that frame because he had the perspective working perfectly. Every time you look at a Ralph McQuarrie you learn something new about perspective."

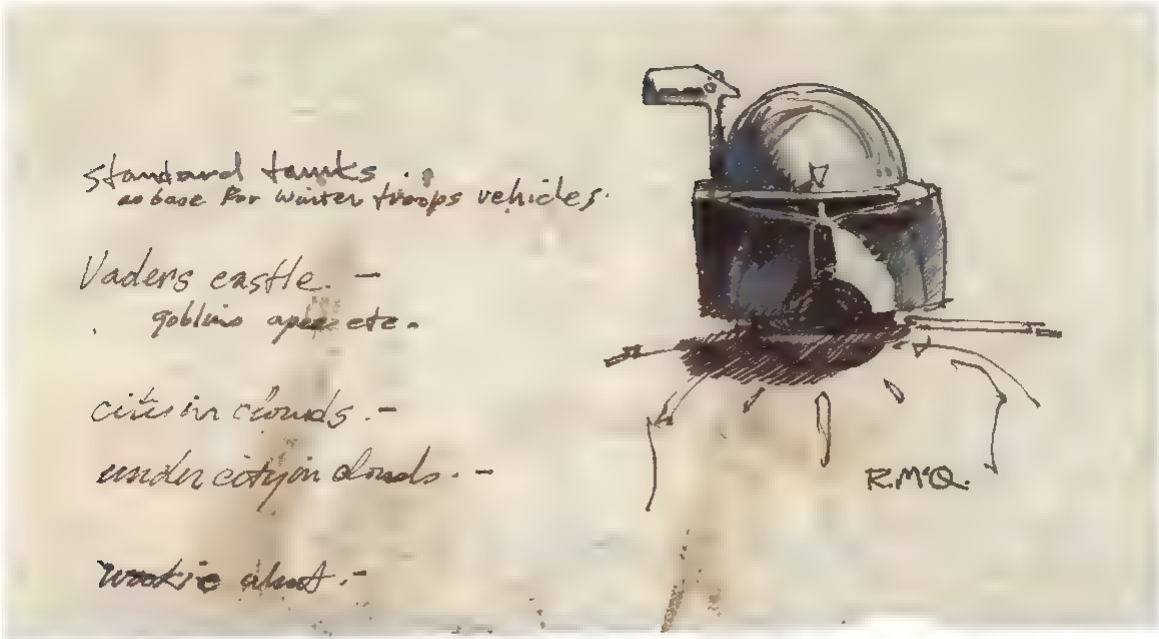
"Ralph always found an angle that told the best story and he let the scene in evocative and subtle ways that very few illustrators can match," adds Johnston. "Ralph was a very cinematic, visual storyteller. His compositions were dramatic and always looked like images of frozen action—snapshots of a dynamic moment."

Reynolds began working on set designs in September and in October the offices for Chapter II Productions were established at Elstree Studios. Irvin Kershner arrived in London on October 28, followed a day later by Ralph McQuarrie. "I felt it was important that Ralph be here with the art department and crew and could help visualize some of the key things that we were looking to design," says Kurtz. "He played such a key role in the critical development of the first film, and we were using a lot of the same elements. We didn't have to worry about Darth Vader and stormtroopers anymore, so he had a chance to be a little more creative with some of the new things that he was doing."

"We focused Ralph on illustrating certain scenes in the script that we could show the art department to use as scene-working stuff. We also wanted to do another portfolio," says Kurtz. McQuarrie's paintings would play a key role in the marketing of *The Empire Strikes Back*. "We released some of them before the film came out, so we had some word of mouth out there," Kurtz says.

The English crew welcomed McQuarrie's presence in their department, helmed by Reynolds. Many had worked on *Star Wars* and were well aware of McQuarrie's contribution. "I remember saying to Robert Watts that the person who should really be here is Ralph McQuarrie," says production supervisor Bruce Sharman. "I thought it would just enhance the whole thing."

"In my fifty-two years in the business, Ralph was certainly one of the best visualizers I ever met," recalls art director Alan Tomkins. "Every little piece of pencil



Concept sketch, snowtrooper commander helmet

The Roman-type helmet design, which originally appeared in artwork for the first Star Wars *script, evolved into the bounty hunter Boba Fett. The helmet's basic shape changed, but the concept of the separate "pop-up" eye piece remained for more*

When I was writing the script for *Star Wars* I wanted to develop an essential evil character that was frightening. Darth Vader started as a kind of intergalactic bounty hunter in a space suit and evolved into a more grotesque knight as I got more into knights and the codes of everything. He became more of a Dark Lord than a mercenary bounty hunter. The Boba Fett character is really an early version of Darth Vader. He's also very much like the man-with-no-name from the Sergio Leone westerns." **GEORGE LUCAS** WRITER/STORY EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

"I had a sketch of a helmet with this Roman opening a slot going down the center. I was going to be an officer in the imperial army on both (see also page 184, lower left), George kind of liked the sketch and then one morning said, 'Let's use this helmet and make it one of the bounty hunters.' George outlined this character as being loaded with all kinds of weapons. Joe took my helmet for an imperial snow officer and made a costume for him. We both made sketches showing details of this costume." **RALPH MCQUARRIE** DESIGN CONSULTANT AND CONCEPTUAL ARTIST/MATTE ARTIST

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drawing that he did we salivated over. At the end of the day we used to look in his rubbish bin for anything that he threw away, and we wouldn't find a thing. There was never the smallest original Ralph McQuarrie sketch. Everything he did he must have been filed away."

McQuarrie made a fast friend in veteran film illustrator Ivor Beddoes, part of the English crew who had also worked on the original *Star Wars*. Beddoes had been storyboarding live-action sequences for Kershner since July. McQuarrie was asked to assist, and the pair proceeded to work together on many of the remaining sequences including Dagobah, the lightsaber duel on Cloud City, and the battle of Hoth. "Ivor's office was next to mine; he was a fantastic person. He could compose music, act—he was just a wonder," McQuarrie said. The two men would have long meetings with the director to review sequences, frequently revising each other's work as Kershner injected new ideas.

McQuarrie also worked on new designs while in England. He did extensive illustrations for Cloud City interiors, the denizens of Bespin, and the medical droid, Reynolds developed the films key sets, sometimes working from McQuarrie's prior illustrations and sometimes pursuing other directions. "I worked on almost everything," said McQuarrie. "There were only a few scenes in the film that I didn't contribute to. There were some things that I designed for the film that were subsequently dropped usually because soundstage space wasn't adequate, or the designs would have been too expensive. The finished movie will be the result of teamwork involving some of the most creative people in the movie industry today. I'm happy to be a part of it."

In April, back in the United States, many of McQuarrie's completed production illustrations were filmed for use in *Empire*'s teaser trailer. The artist had continued to complete new paintings regularly throughout his time in the UK. "Most of the production illustrations were painted in the US over a period of a year and a half," McQuarrie said. "The others were done in England, where I spent almost a year during the filming of the picture." While the vast majority of these were done as true pieces of production art, a small number were done in the interest of completing the portfolio to be released to consumers. "I completed a few extra paintings especially for the portfolio, just to complete the collection and have something on every important scene in the film," McQuarrie said. "But most of the paintings were done to solve the film's design problems."

"Ralph could create a master scene or painting that we never actually had," says Kurtz. "We were quite impressed with the fact that he could look at a rough cut of different shots and make a composite painting. He was creating something that we didn't shoot in a way that we didn't see it—a kind of master of the sequence that could be used for promotional purposes. He gave us exactly what we needed beforehand and after the fact for promotional purposes. I was very impressed with that."

McQuarrie returned home on June 11, 1979, having spent nine months living and working in London. At the same time, George Lucas set off to the UK, where he would spend the next six weeks helping Kershner complete principal photography. The production was twenty-two days behind schedule.

In October, McQuarrie reunited with matte painting supervisor Harrison Ellenshaw to tackle *Empire*'s matte paintings. The two had a huge number of shots to complete in a short amount of time, but they also had the benefit of a real matte department with a dedicated area to paint, a proper camera system, and a team of camera operators and assistants, including matte camera operator Neil Krepela, artist Michael Pangrazio, and matte assistant Craig Barton. "We had the painting room, but it had nothing in there," says Harrison Ellenshaw. "We had to go get a desk and easels and everything. It was a real work in progress. And it was a good atmosphere. If you needed something, you got it."

The more experienced Ellenshaw was leader of the matte department on the film, and he was very pleased to be working alongside McQuarrie. "I'm very proud to say I got to be Ralph McQuarrie's boss," says Ellenshaw. "I was not the best painter out of the two of us, but I had other skills and I could adapt. Ralph was a strong personality. I never changed anything of Ralph's. It wasn't about offending him, he was just so freaking good that he got the shot right. Ralph's presence also made it easier for the department in the sense that George loved him. So when matte paintings came up in dailies, he was far less critical of the matte department than any other department. We got a little pat on the head, and everybody hated us."

McQuarrie relished his revised role on *The Empire Strikes Back*, but it wasn't easy. "I'm a functioning matte painter. I'm still learning how to do it, and it's difficult. It requires a different attitude. But I'm almost happier working on the matte paintings," he said. "I didn't think I would be, but this is the stuff that goes into the film—and I do like to see it on the screen."

"Because he was such a fantastic artist, Ralph could create imagery for the movie very quickly," recalls Barron. "He didn't do traditional matte painting in the way that Harrison did; he did it Ralph's way, using techniques he developed as a technical illustrator. Not everyone can do matte painting, but Ralph was such a great artist that he could do his own style and get a good effect."

The department was under tremendous pressure to complete the workload. "It was a battle to get that film done," recalls Barron. "Fifty hours a week minimum, and toward the end some of us were working seventy hours or more. You become pretty ineffective at doing anything at that point but we got the job done."

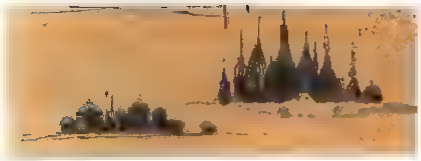
"We've been working ten or eleven hours a day and Saturdays on the matte work," said McQuarrie. "On the illustrations, I was putting in a regular eight-hour day at home, where I do my best work. But, I guess like most artists, I don't want to put everything away until the painting is as finished as I can make it. Working on *Star Wars* films is not just a job to get money so I can live. It goes beyond that."

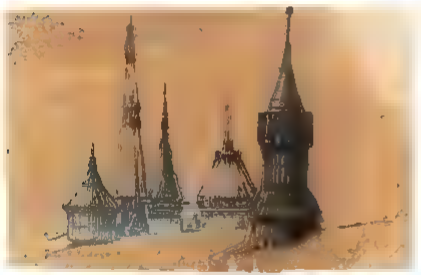
The matte department eventually completed more than seventy paintings, at least twenty of which were done by McQuarrie. The matte shots afford *Empire* the broad scope Lucas envisioned, often at the most critical moments, such as the multiple shots during the climax of Luke's duel with Vader that utilize McQuarrie matte paintings. The department's work was heralded by Lucas as very successful.

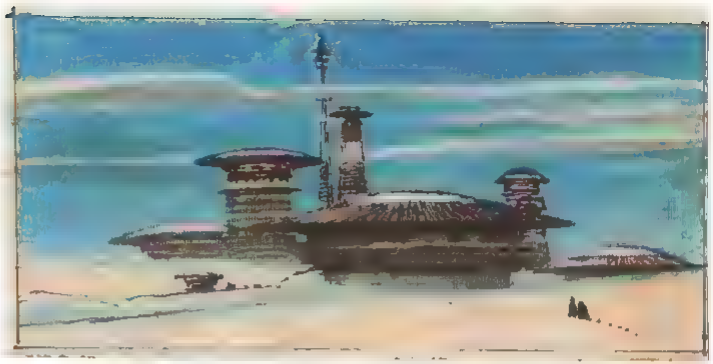
The Empire Strikes Back opened to rave reviews and substantial box-office returns on May 23, 1980. McQuarrie produced more than 1,000 illustrations across two continents during his time on *The Empire Strikes Back*, approximately three times what he produced on the original *Star Wars*. McQuarrie's contribution to the film, along with that of his colleagues, was vitally important. For one individual to be involved with so many different facets of a film's production—concept designs, production illustrations, storyboards, matte paintings, and marketing materials—is highly unusual. "I would say this film is going to mark a state of the art," McQuarrie said. "It's really going to say, 'This is the one to beat.'"

5 Concept sketches, Wookiee planet creature
McQuarrie began working on the sequel to Star Wars from his Los Angeles home in October 1977

6 Concept sketch, young Wookiee





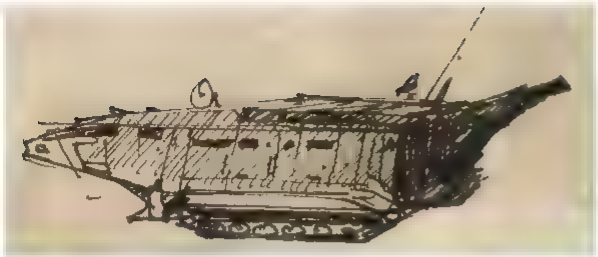


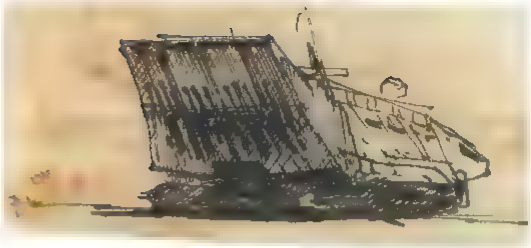
"The first thing we talked about was the battle on Hoth and George said just off the top of his head 'I'd like to see a metal castle in the snow. What I conceived of as a great monstrous edifice that was like a cathedral or a temple had figured most of it was going to be covered up with deep snow, and then there would be these round towers in an all metal castle sticking up out of the snow." McQUARRIE

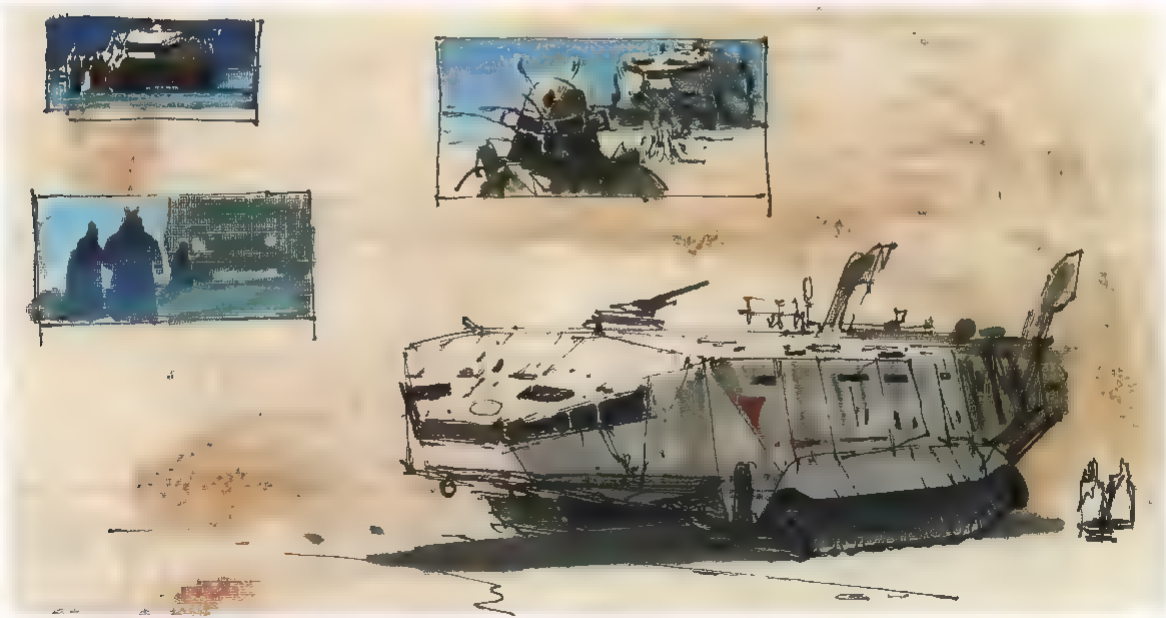
Thumbnail sketches, ice planet castle with Han and Chewie, DATE UNKNOWN

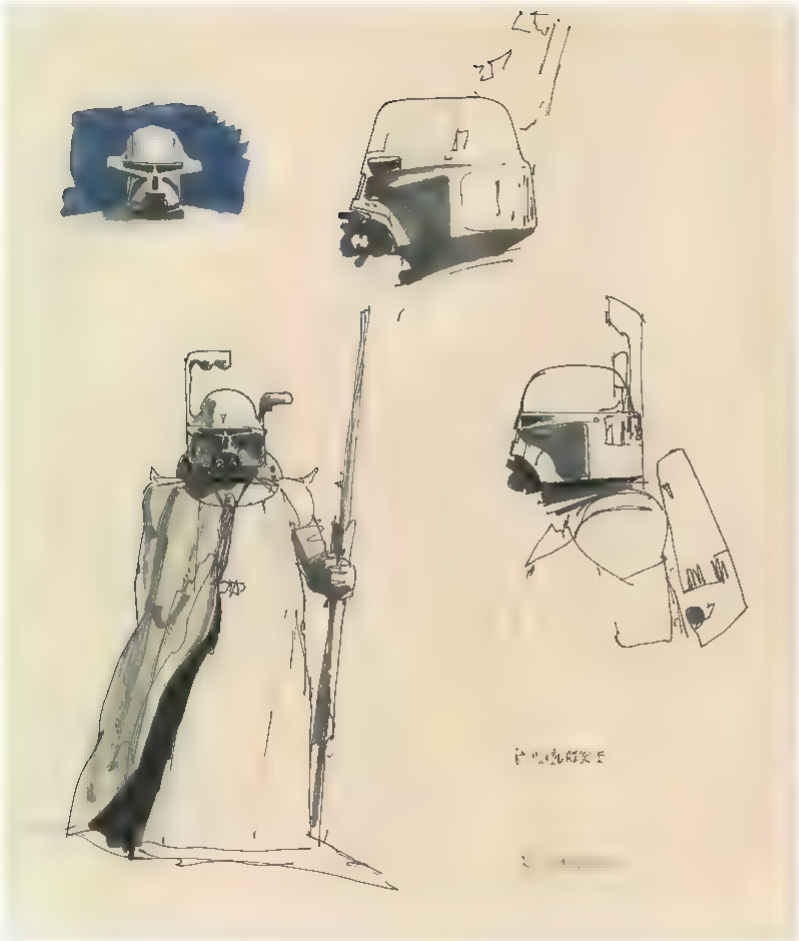
Concept sketches, ice planet Imperial tank vehicles

Concept and thumbnail sketches, ice planet Imperial vehicles and snowtroopers







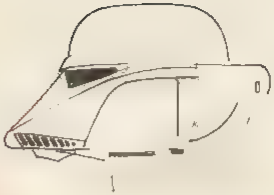


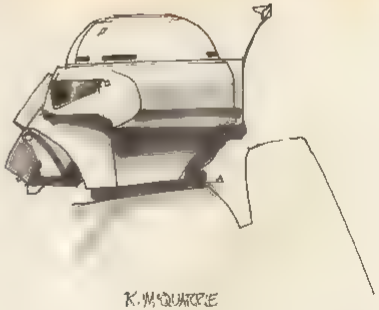
"This costume [ ] was a little like something worn in Noh dramas." RALPH MCQUARRIE

Concept sketches, snowtrooper commander

Concept sketches (from transparency), snowtrooper commander

Opposite: Concept sketches, snowtrooper commander





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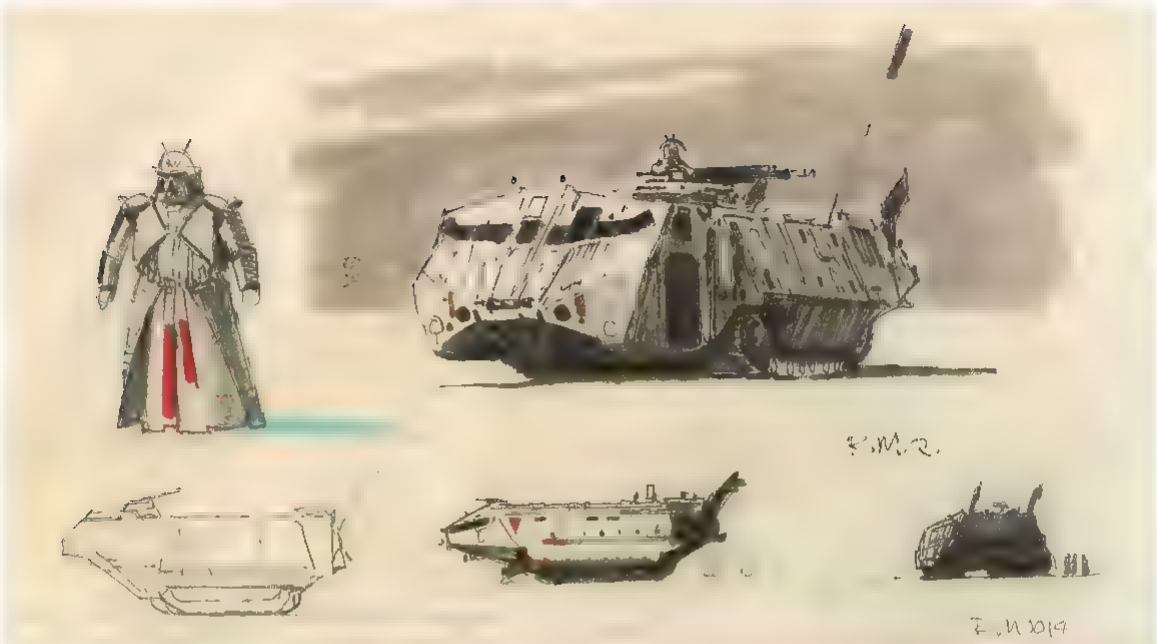
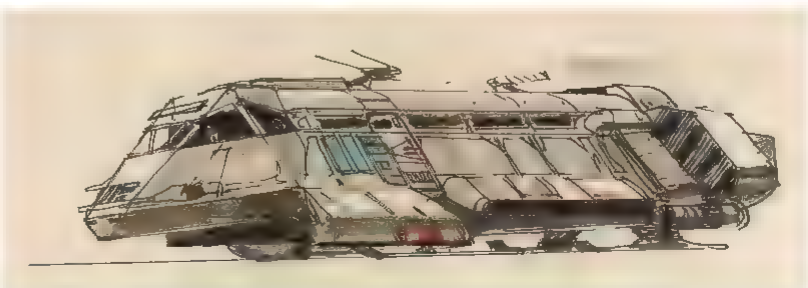


FROM THE THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK STORY TREATMENT BY GEORGE LUCAS. NOVEMBER 28, 1977

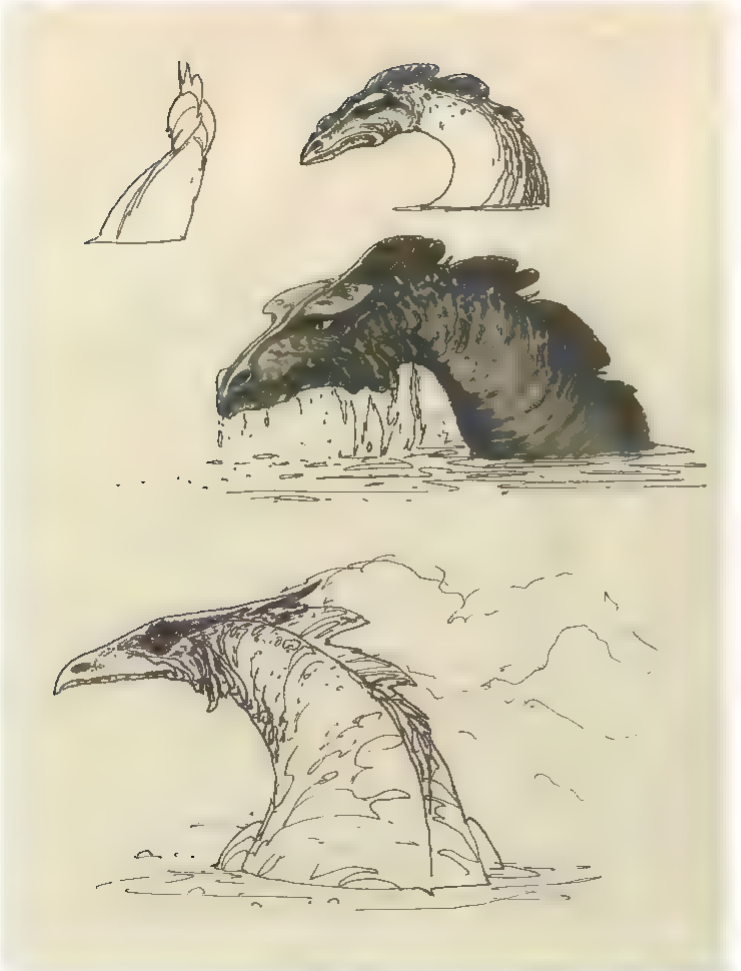
The great snow battle of Hoth is fought by armored landspeeders (helicopter-like) and giant mechanical horses (tanks)

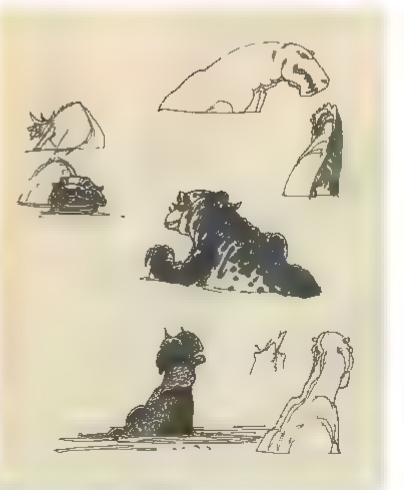


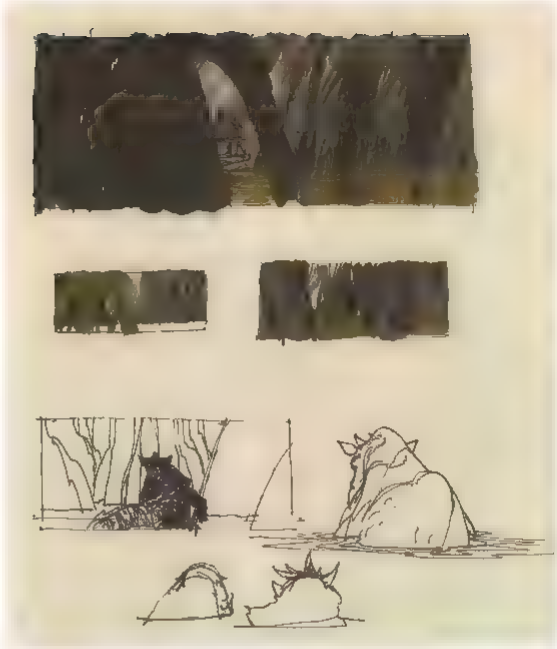
4 5 Concept sketches, snowtrooper commander helmet

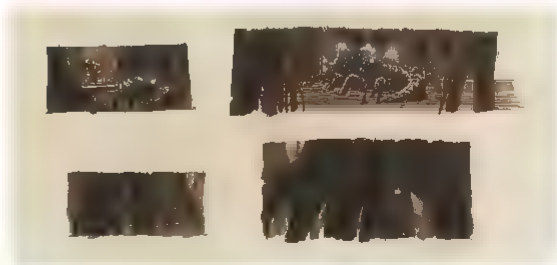
4 Concept sketches, Imperial tank vehicles and snowtrooper commander

5 Concept sketch, Imperial vehicle









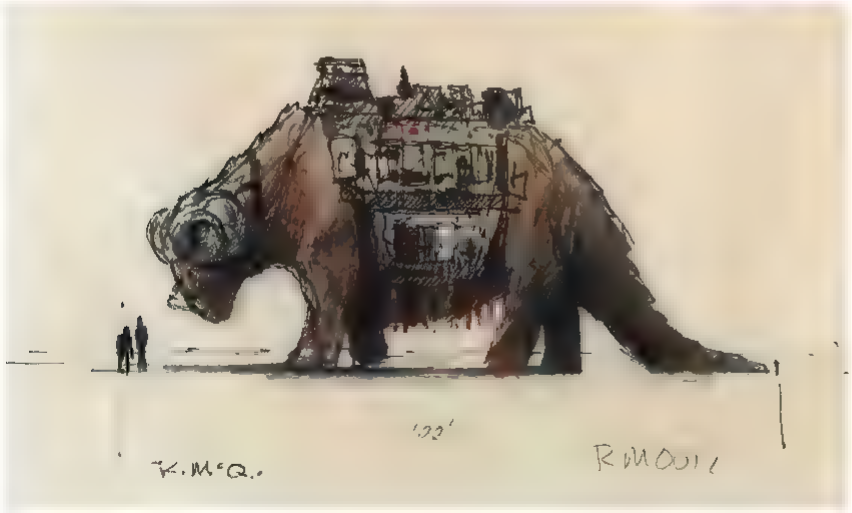
5 Concept sketches, bog planet creatures

Thumbnail and concept sketches, bog planet creature encounter

6 Thumbnail sketches, bog planet creature encounter

"George wanted what he called a bog planet, and my first sketches just showed a sort of tangled undergrowth and big trees coming down. I was basing them a little on illustrator Arthur Rackham's tangled undergrowth and had the gnarled roots, branches coming down and things hanging, Spanish moss and that kind of thing, but it didn't seem otherworldly."

McQUARRIE



"We could have a Wookiee planet and bring more Wookiees in even if Chewbacca is long gone in this one with Han Solo. We may or may not use the Wookiee planet in this one." LUCAS

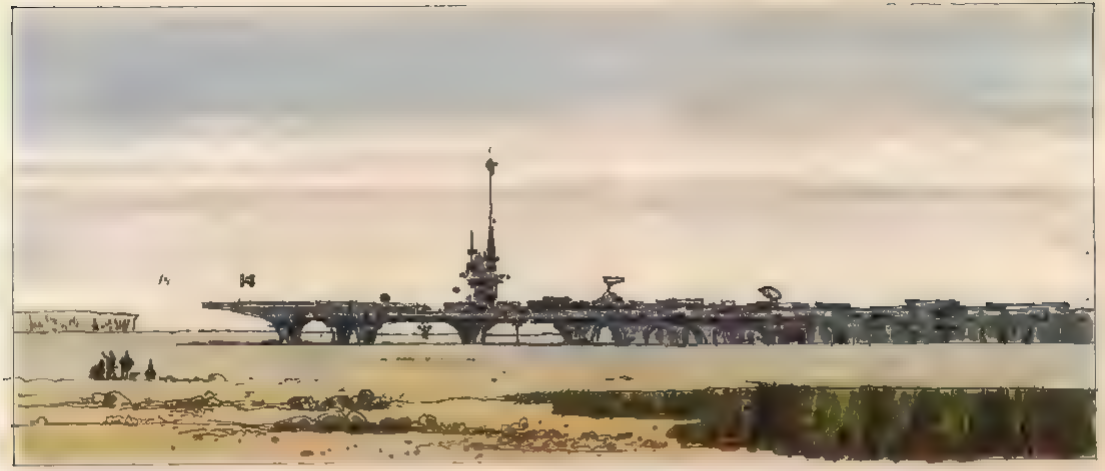
4 Concept sketch, Wookiee planet treetops
[illegible] how the treetops can support weight [illegible] [illegible] he could walk on the tree tops, may be the answer [illegible]

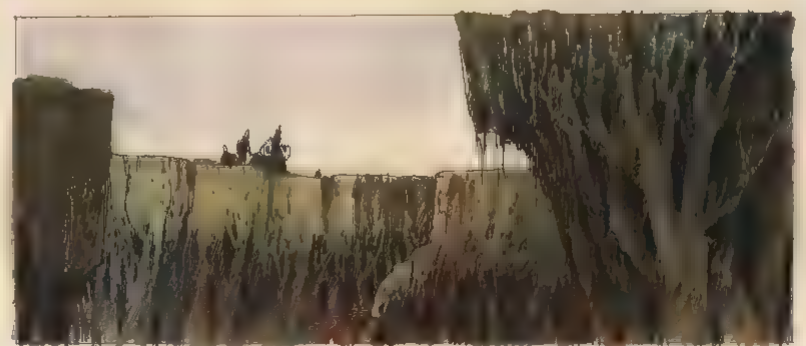
5 Concept sketch, Wookiees with beasts
The Wookiee planet will be inhabited by early species that are [illegible] with outer shapes from [illegible] Wars Holiday Special.

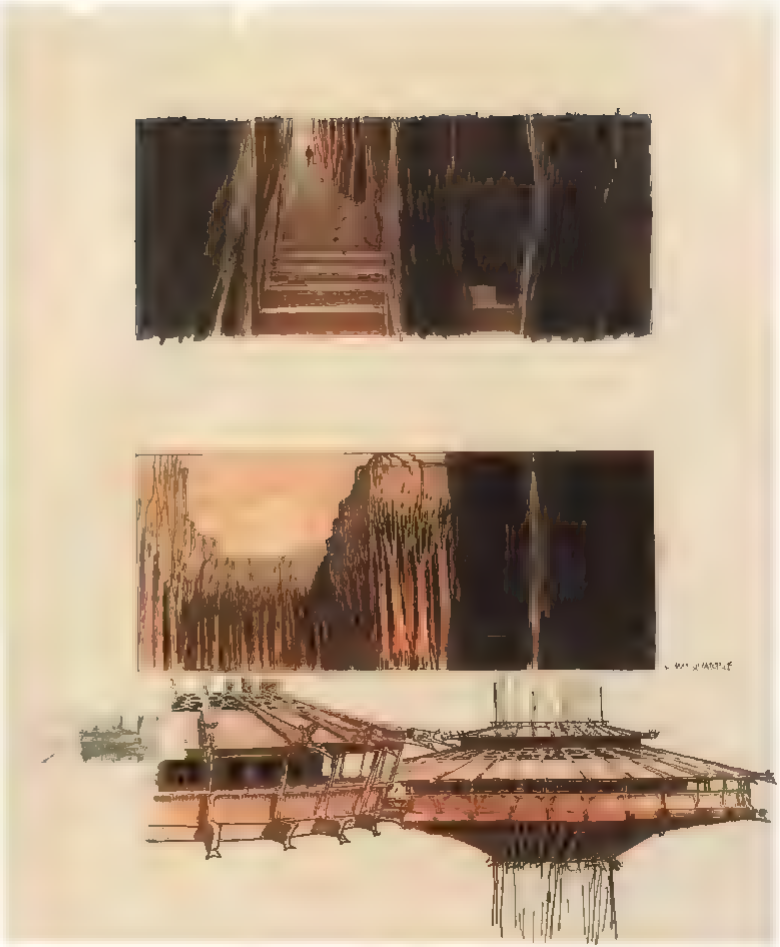
6 Concept sketch, Wookiee planet beast
These beasts were based on the monsters from the Wall. See page 128.

SPREAD 3-6 Concept sketches, Wookiee planet creatures

R. W. McQ.







"We worked quite a lot on the Wookiee planet which was to be the home of Chewbacca. That was very interesting to me. We created this giant forest Wookiee homes, accessories, the transportation and the look of the surface of a planet where the Imperials have their base . . ." MCQUARRIE

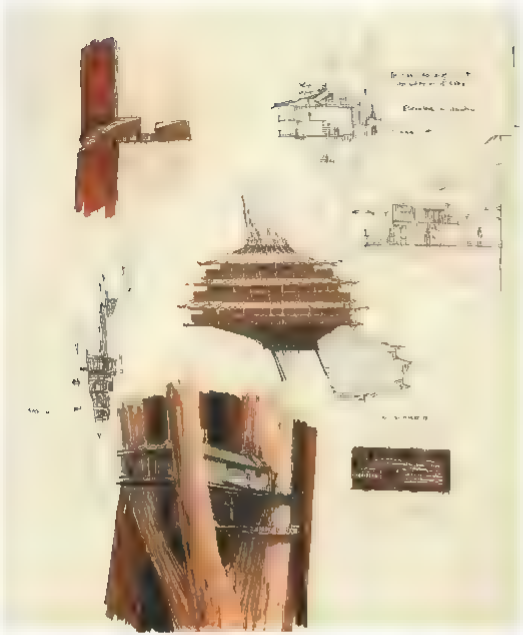
1 Concept sketch, Imperial landing craft on Wookiee planet
"Ralph McQuarrie drew a bigger Imperial landing platform, part of the exhibit that was to be erected on the planet."

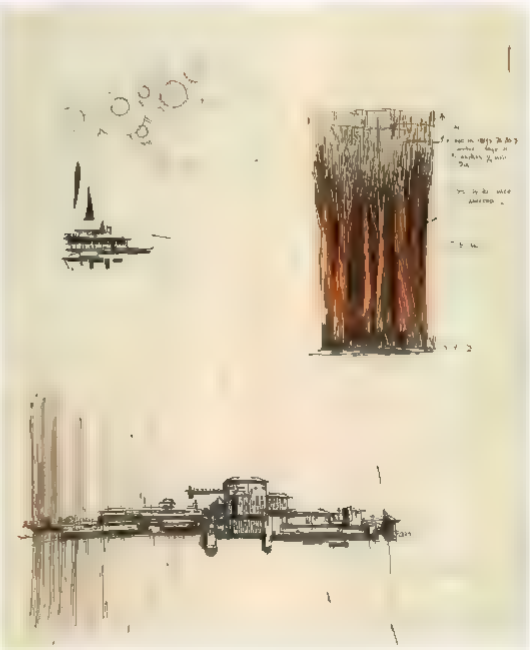
Thumbnail sketches, Imperial landing platform on Wookiee planet

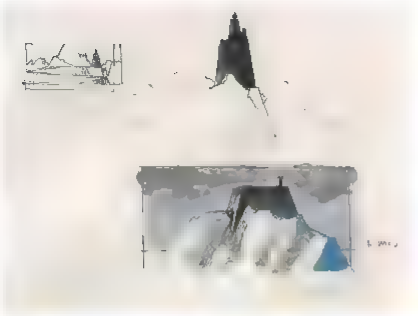
3 Concept sketch, Wookiee planet trees
McQuarrie envisioned a tree-lover to ride the chevdets. Could work on it.

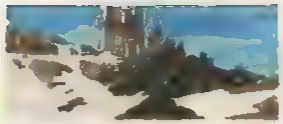
4 Thumbnail sketches, Wookiee planet landscape

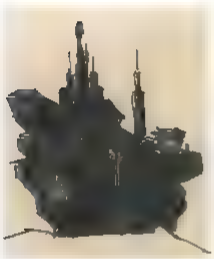
Concept sketches, Wookiee planet and home

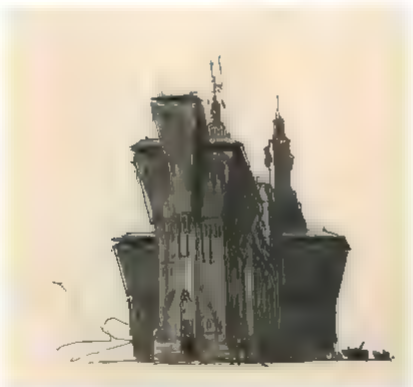


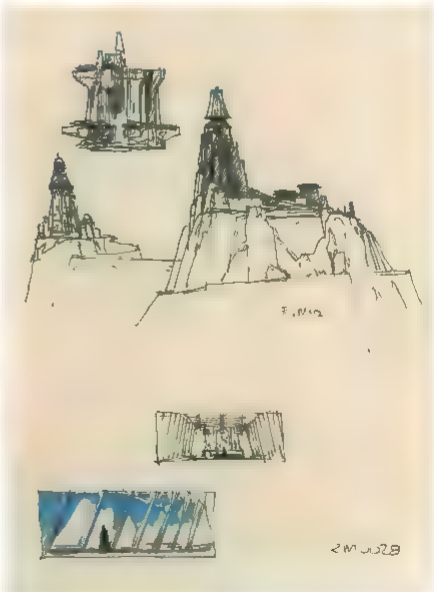












5 Concept sketches, Wookiee home exteriors

6 Concept sketch, Wookiee home interior

Mary reader, she farmed with horse drawn [illegible] on holiday special outside with [illegible]

7 Concept sketch, Wookiee home exteriors

8 Concept sketches, Wookiee planet

An [illegible] showing the incredible scale of the Wookiee [illegible]

9 10 Concept sketches, Vader's castle

11 Concept sketch, Vader's castle interior

[illegible] Vader's [illegible] the [illegible] little place is on the [illegible] [illegible] a big point will be [illegible] the time that [illegible] [illegible] during [illegible] the volume [illegible] to do so not make it look [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible]

12 Thumbnail and concept sketches, Vader's castle

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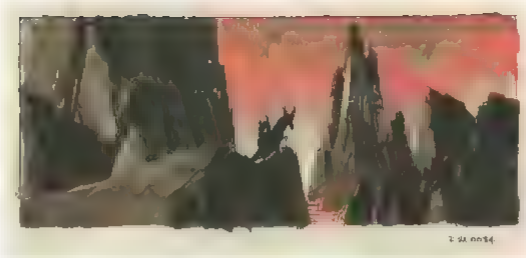
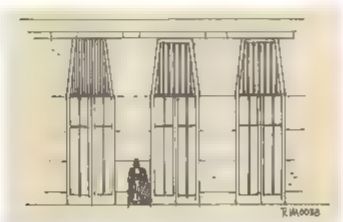
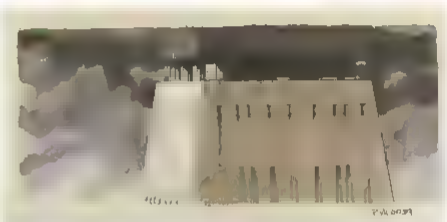






"It might be nice to give Vader a little castle on a rock in the middle of the ocean. One way to see him would be in a tall, dark tower, very narrow in a lava flow—dark, red, and burning, almost like hell." LUCAS

1 Concept sketches, Vader's castle interior

2 Concept sketches, Vader's castle

Concept sketch (from transparency), Vader's castle

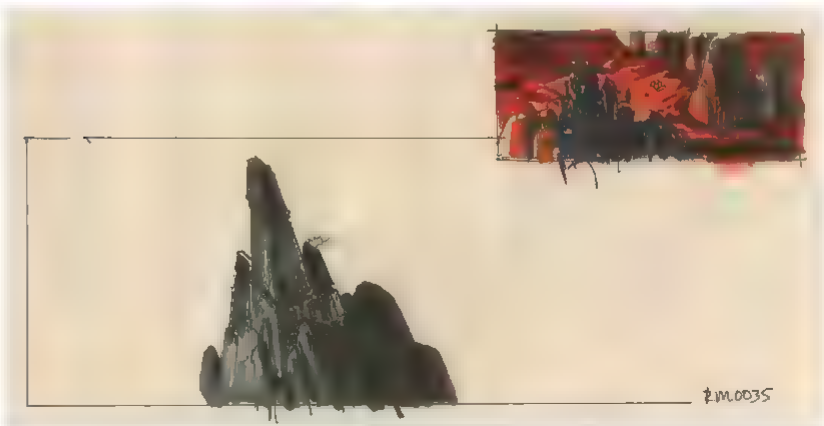
4 Thumbnail sketch, six planes rebel hangar
[illegible] ship layouts, feedback from George
[illegible] Yoda to Ob

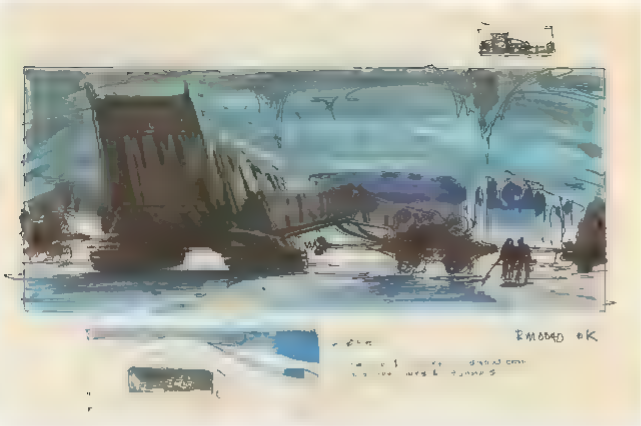
6 7 Thumbnail and concept sketches, Vader's castle

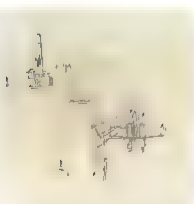
8 Concept sketch, Vader's castle

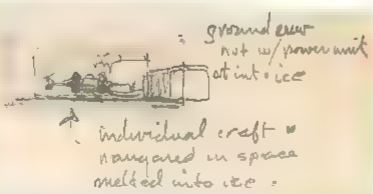
9 10 Concept sketches, Vader's castle interior

11 12 Thumbnail and concept sketches, Vader's castle
[illegible] Vader [illegible]
[illegible] Vader's castle








ground crew
not w/ power unit
at int. ice
individual craft
ranged in space
melted into ice

more for alt-

Concept sketches, fighter retrieval vehicle
Several McQuarrie concept sketches
[illegible] to retrieve damaged rebel starfighters

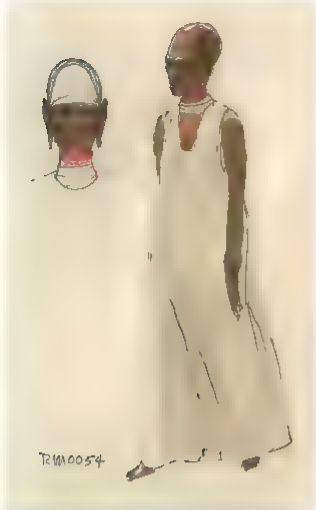
A Thumbnail sketch, individual craft hangar

Costume sketches, rebel pilot uniform
[illegible] represent feedback from Lucas

B Concept sketches, lizard tauntaun

"I did a lot of sketches of the tauntaun. First George said it was sort of lizard-like, and I didn't get lizard together with the snow because I'm kind of literal. I know that lizards don't function well in cold weather. They just get lethargic and don't do a thing." MCQUARRIE

"I've always wanted to do a fantasy thing with knights riding around on giant lizards. Might be worth it this time to start out that way with a giant lizard/bird image, a two-legged beast. We could have someone riding one of those across the snow in a storm while searching the area." LUCAS



FROM *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK* STORY TREATMENT, NOVEMBER 1977

Luke arrives at the cloud city, riding a large monster, an flying creature with several of the aliens. The huge beasts soar down to the city and land on one of the platforms

"Besprin is like any other city: It's got ruffians, workers, slaves and all kinds of stuff. I was concerned with the upper class because the rebels meet Lando Calrissian, a gambler who operates in the upper class. The people around him were quite an elegant group of people." McQUARRIE

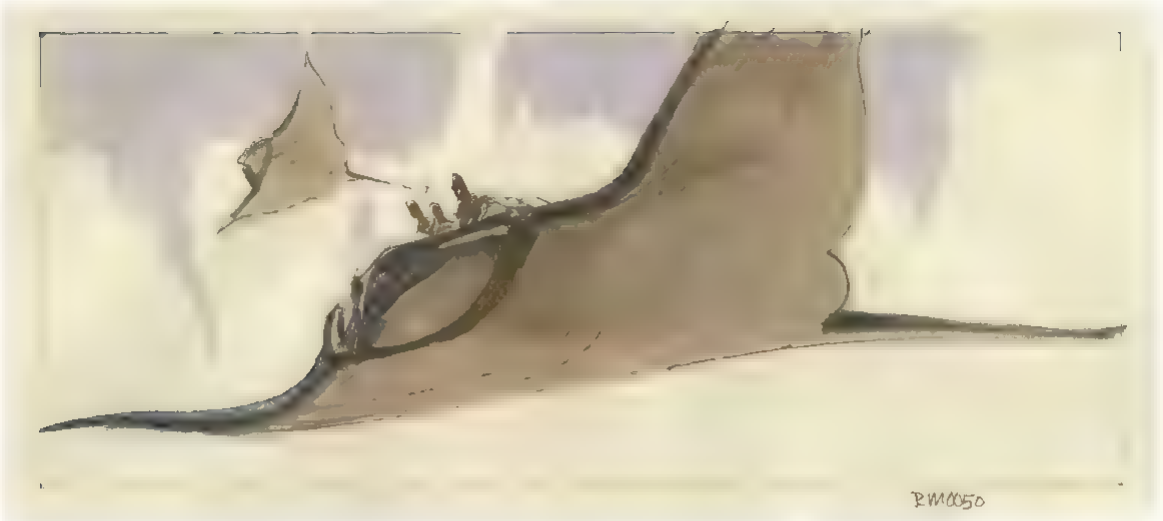
"At the time we were talking about Cloud City and the strange and exotic environment, and I think George liked the idea of these oud flying creatures, but there was the practicality of trying to do it. We didn't have time so we never did it." GARY KURTZ PRODUCER

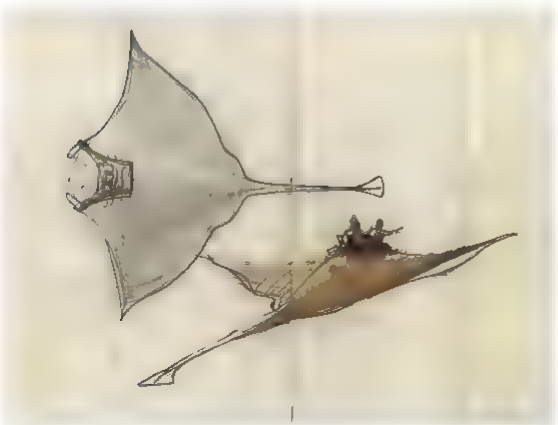
3 Concept sketches, Cloud City residents

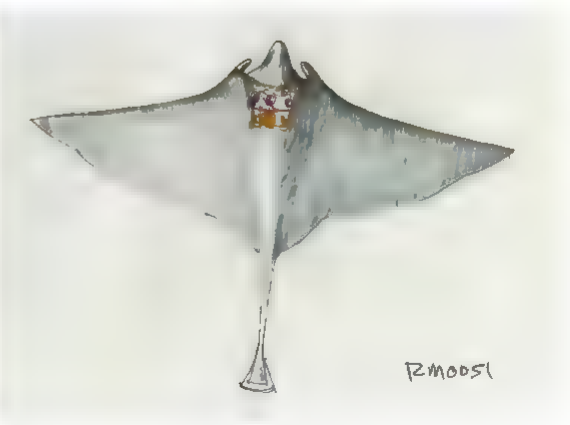
Concept sketches, Cloud City aliens

5 Concept sketches, Cloud City residents

6 Concept sketches, Cloud City flying creature


RM0050

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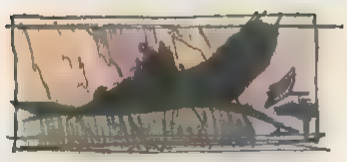
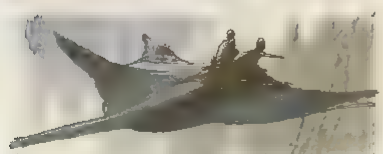




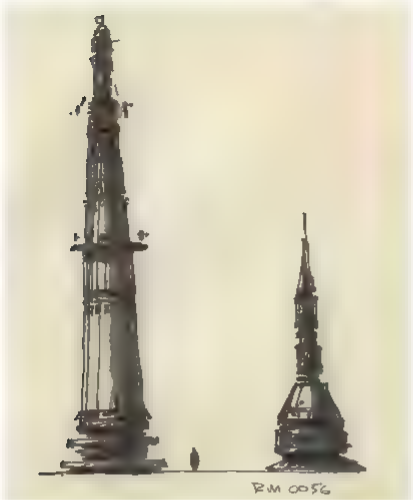
"Cloud City has undergone a series of changes since the original concept as Aderaan. (see pages 42–43). Most of the changes have involved a different handling of the structures on top of the city. They tend to give a kind of scale to the whole thing, and I kept adding more buildings and towers to give it an even larger appearance. I also redesigned the lower section of Cloud City, so it's really quite a bit larger than the original version. As it appears in the film, we figured it would be about twenty miles across." MCQUARRIE

Concept sketch, Cloud City flying creatures

2 Thumbnail sketches, Cloud City flying creature

3 Concept sketches, Cloud City surface elements and interior

4 Concept sketches, Cloud City
Lewis and McQuarrie agreed to revise the abandoned floating city concept from the original film for "Cloud City in Empire (see page 42–43).



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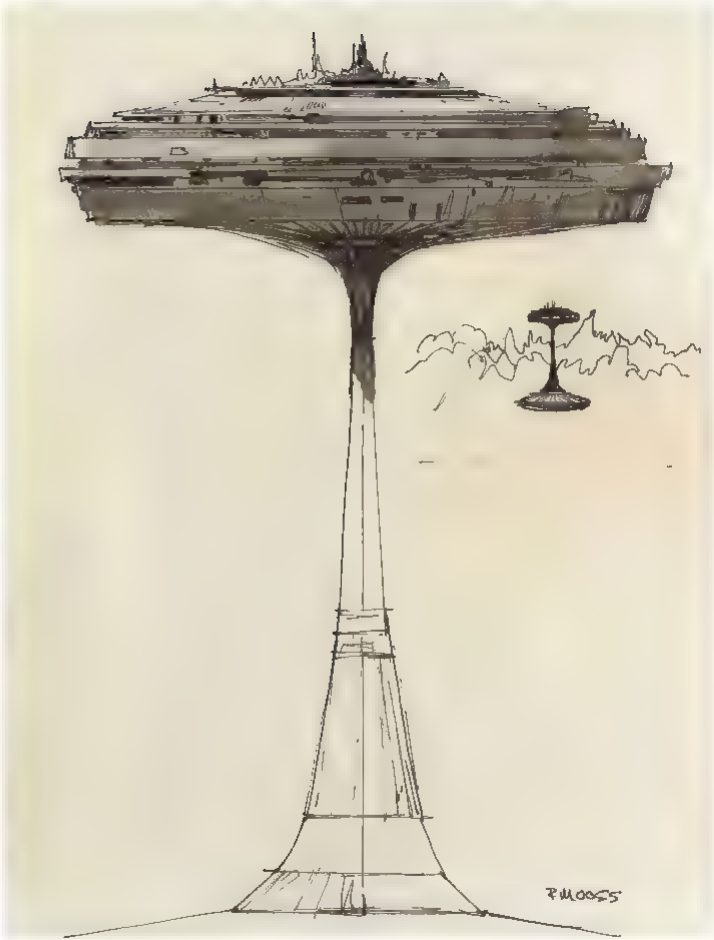
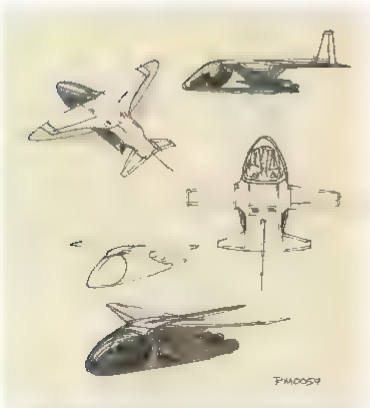
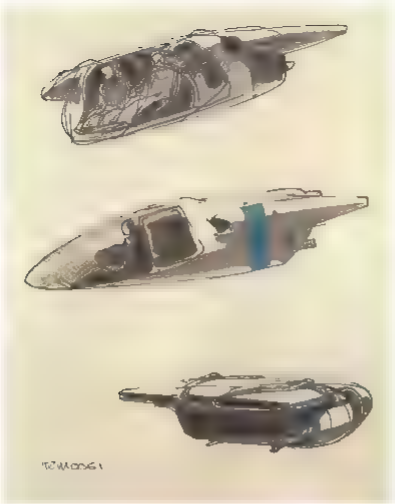


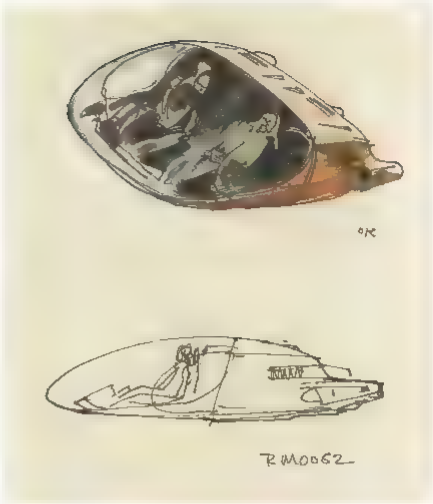
B

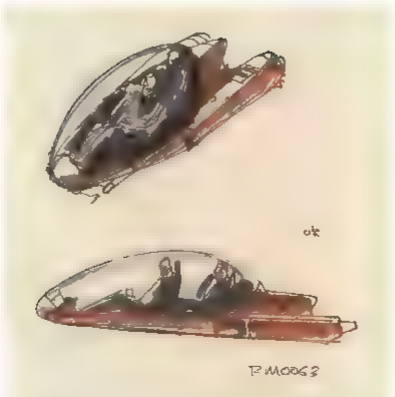
RM0058

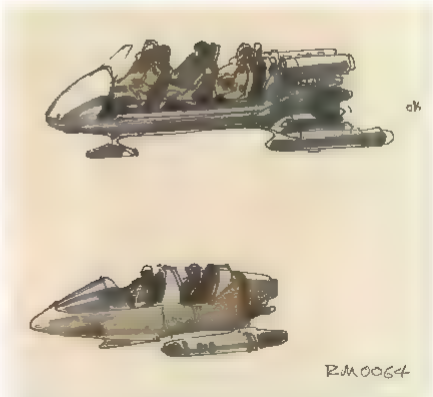

RM0059

RM0060

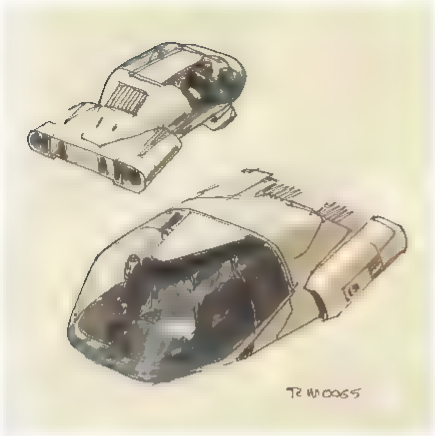


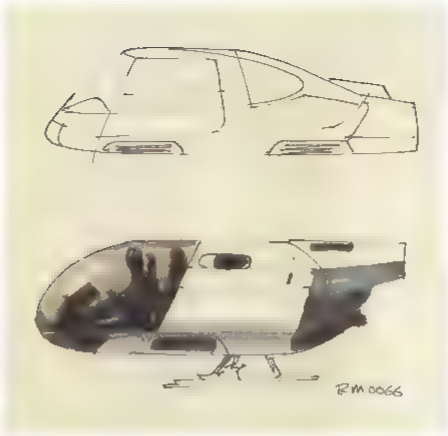


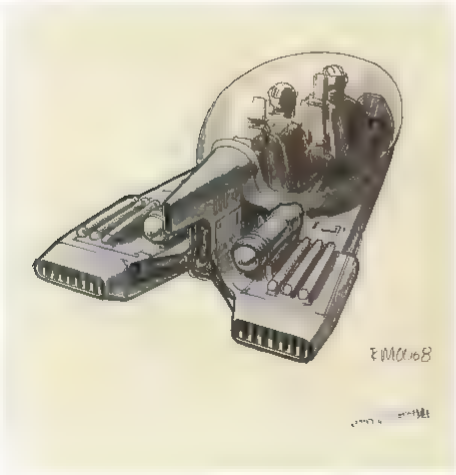


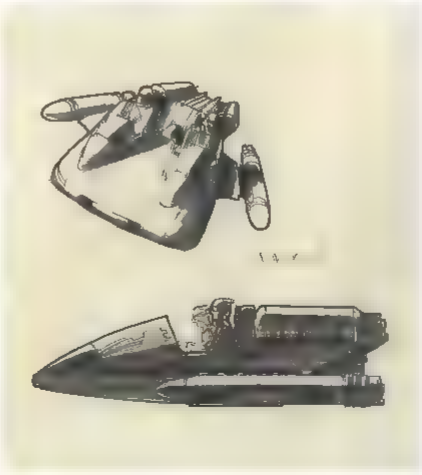


1–7 Concept sketches, cloud car vehicle

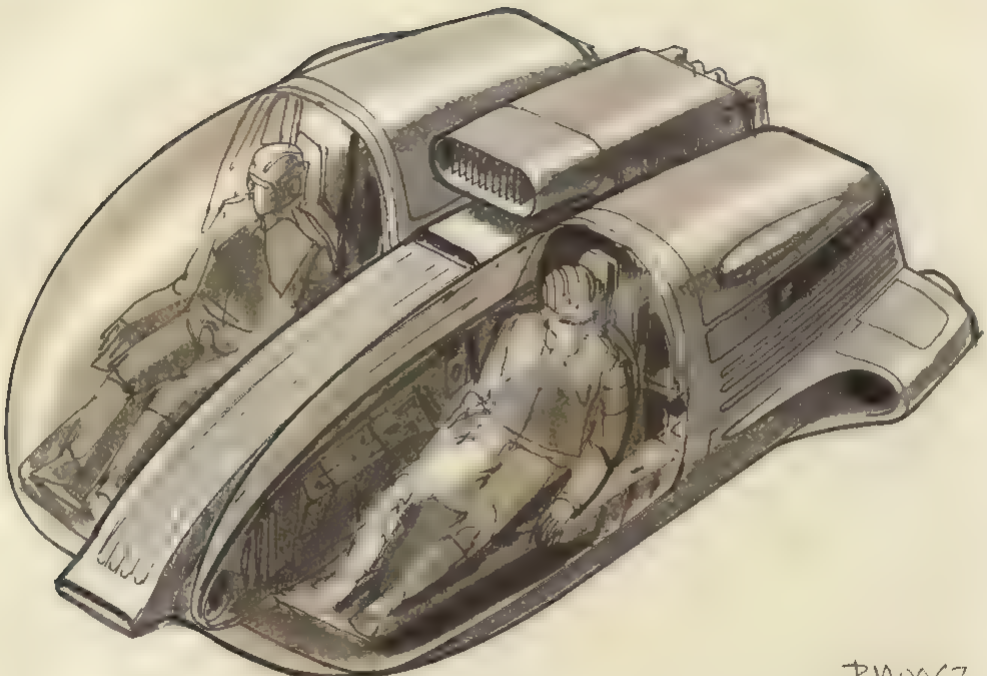






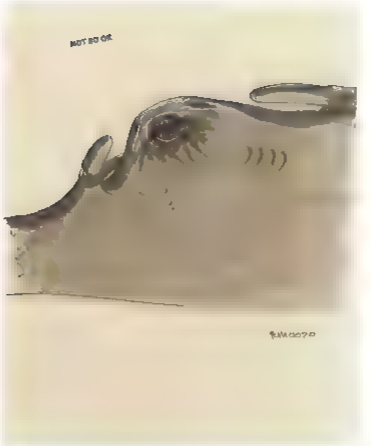


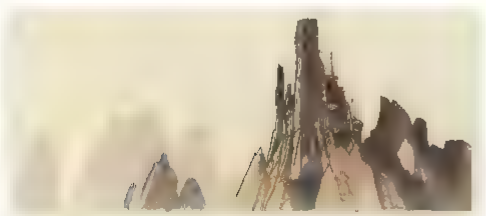
Concept sketches, cloud car vehicle



PM0067

WONDERFUL!



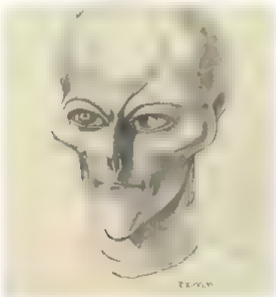


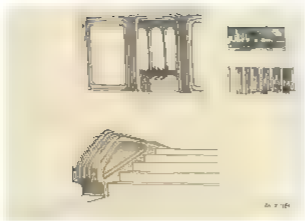
1–2 Concept sketches, Vader's castle

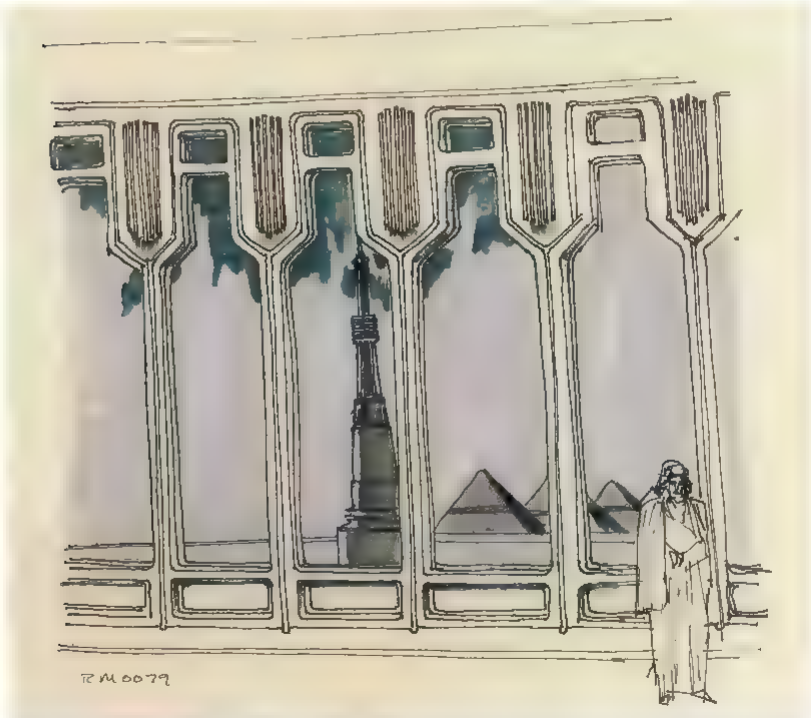
3–4 Concept sketches, Cloud City flying creature

5–9 Concept sketches, Cloud City aliens
Lucas's original vision of Cloud City included noble-looking warriors who rode giant flying [illegible]

10 Concept sketch, Cloud City alien woman



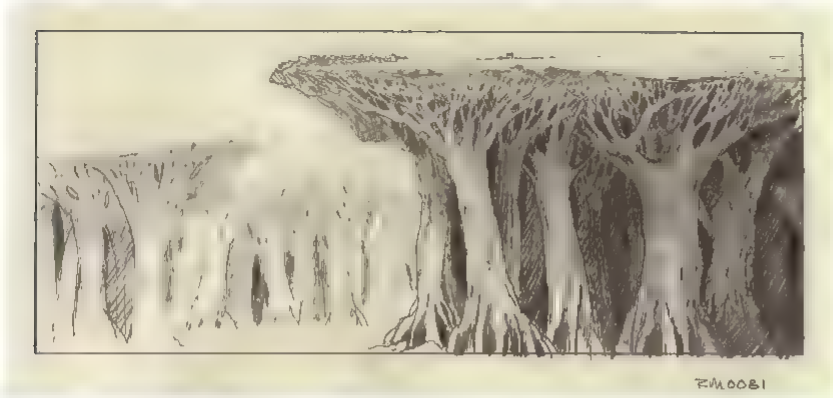


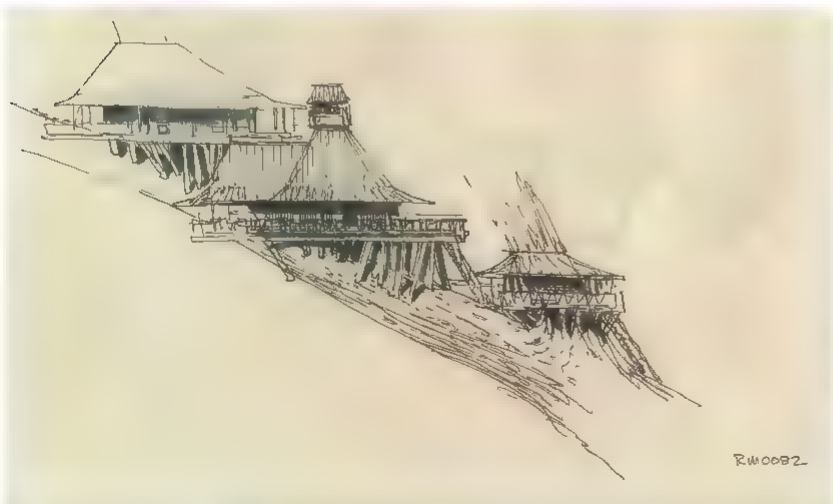


a Concept sketches, Cloud City aliens

b Costume sketch, rebel pilot snow uniform

4–6 Thumbnail and concept sketches, Cloud City interior





Concept sketch, Wookiee planet treetops

Concept sketch, Wookiee home :001

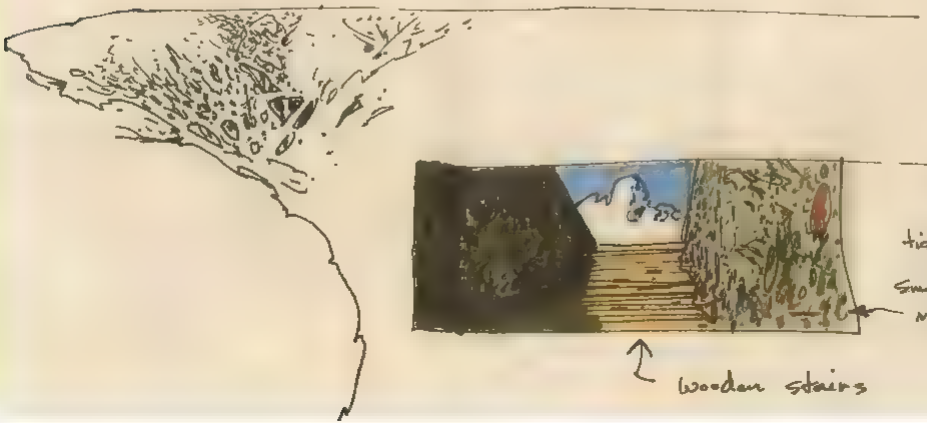
3 6. **Concept sketches, Wookiee homes**

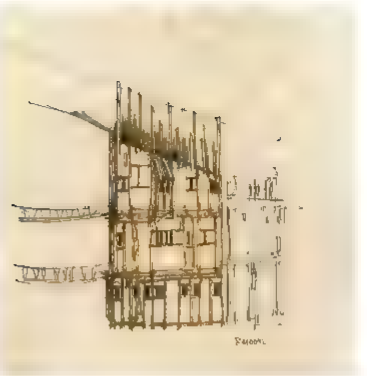
7 **Concept sketch, Wookiee planet treetops**

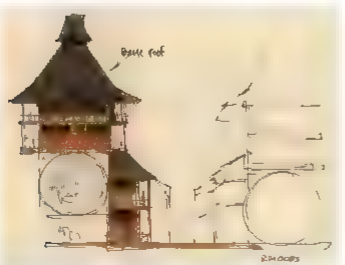
212 THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

how do you get down to a wookie village from the surface or tops of the trees?.

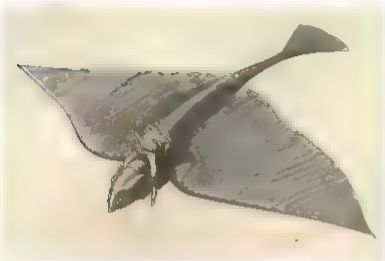
Why do wookie village buildings need roofs. the forest provides a solid roof?: the forest Roof leaks?. ok.

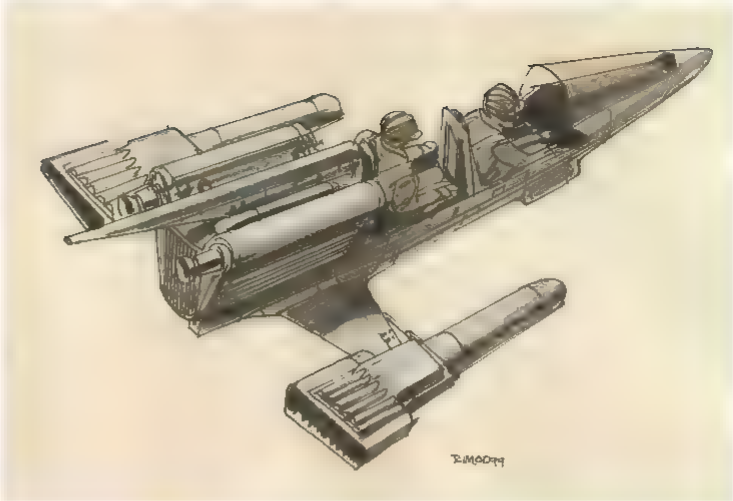





Base roof

1 Concept sketch: Wookiee home
2 Concept sketch, suspended Wookiee home
3, 4 Concept sketches: Wookiee home
5 Concept sketch, suspended Wookiee home
6, 7 Concept sketches, Wookiee porch
8 Concept sketches: Wookiee furniture
9 Concept sketch, Wookiee home interior

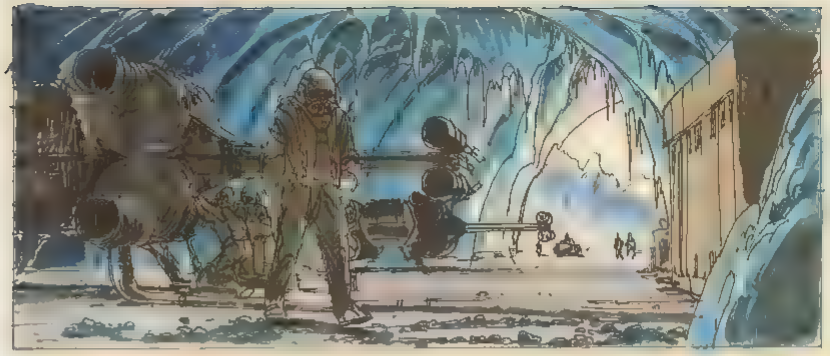


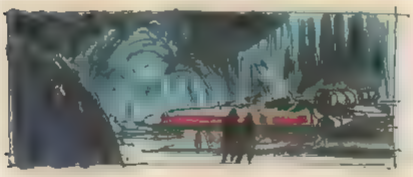


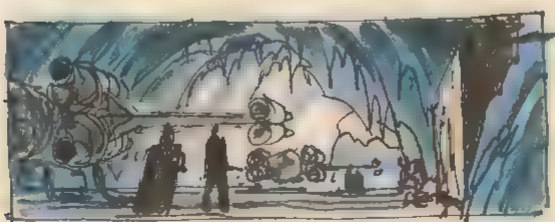
"I was working on the design of an animal called the tauntaun. It's this large beast that Luke rides around on. As it turns out, it's an animal that has to function in the snow. So I took back the beast and winterized it put hair on the tauntaun, just because I thought it would be curious to see a lizard-type creature with fur because I had never seen one, and it sounded like the logical way to go for him." **McQUARRIE**

"George actually told Ralph a few times to think of a big rat. He wanted a big, rat-like snow creature. And as it turned out, Ralph's sketch looked like a big rat with human legs! That design alone would have made for complications." **JOE JOHNSTON** VISUAL EFFECTS ART DIRECTOR

2. Concept sketches, Cloud City flying creature and rider
3. Concept sketch, cloud car vehicle
4. Concept sketch, tauntaun and rider
   The lizard has now been "winterized" with fur
5–6. Concept sketches, ice planet rebel hangar





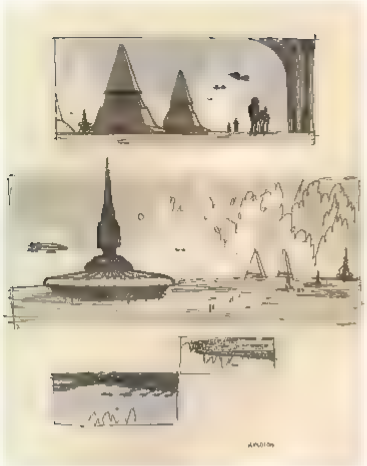


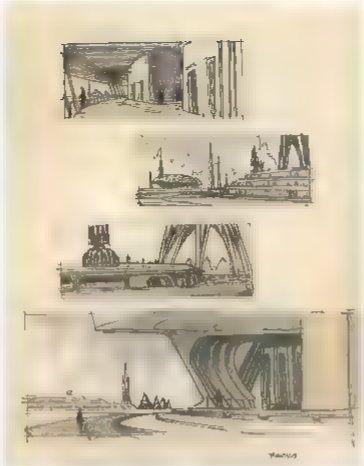
warming hut.
set into wall.

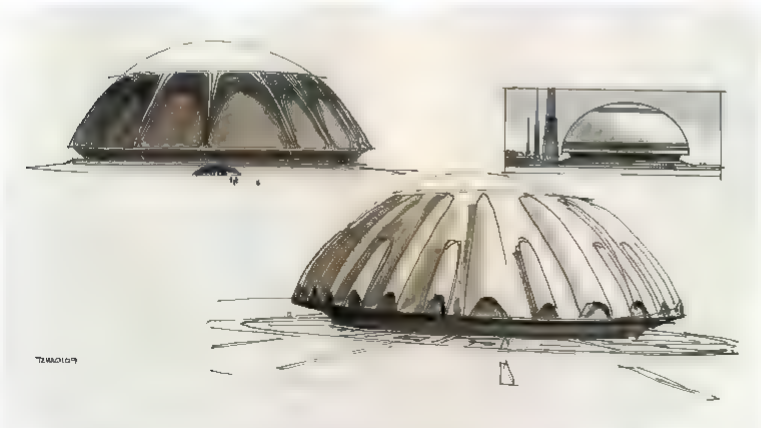
ZM0101

O.K.

distant Mountains
seen through cave Entrance.







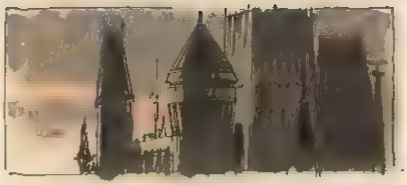
Art Deco is something George brought up. So much of this film was George's thinking. A lot of the forms I came up with, but the basic idea for what it should be was George's. So as much as I actually designed things in the movie, George really designed them too. George gets a great deal of design credit in both pictures in my estimation.

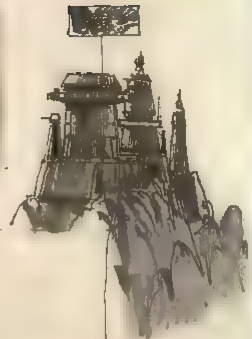
"We first started off with the idea that maybe it could be sort of like Flash Gordon city so I looked up what I could on Art Deco, and I have just drifted off with that in mind vaguely thirties jelly-mold kind of thing with the big rounded forms coming out all around and repeated with decorative inlays. I wanted to go further somehow. I'm trying to design it so it doesn't look like one of these things with no reason to be." MCQUARRIE

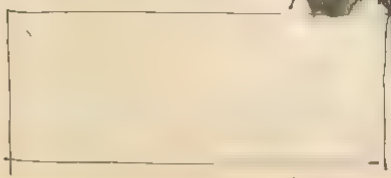
"Bespin and Cloud City were great. It's almost like that entire place is Ralph. It's not even Art Deco, it's Ralph." NILO RODIS-JAMERO
ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

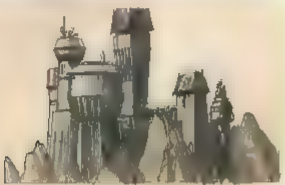
1–4 Concept sketches, Cloud City exteriors

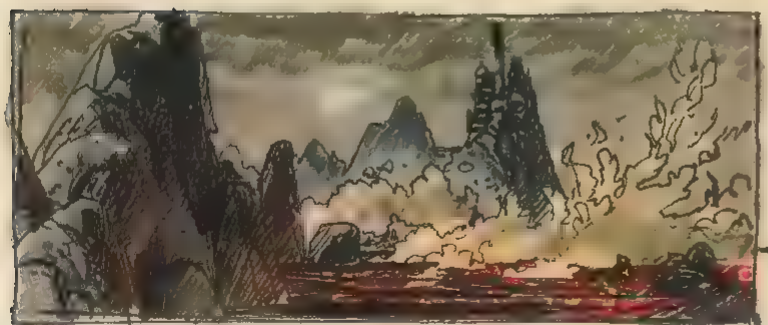
5 Concept sketches, Vader's castle



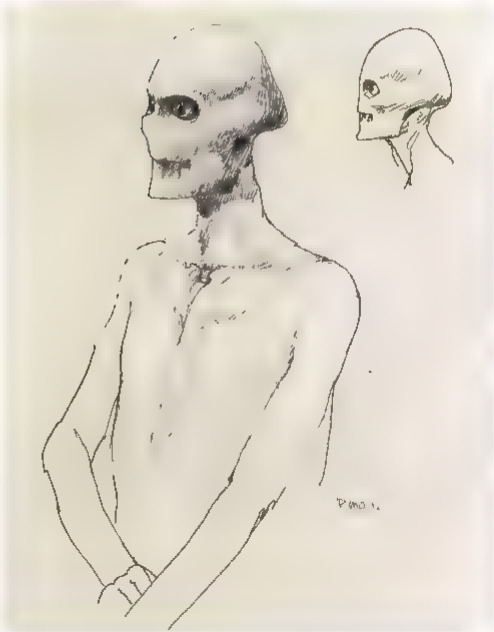








Steam & smoke coming off lava.

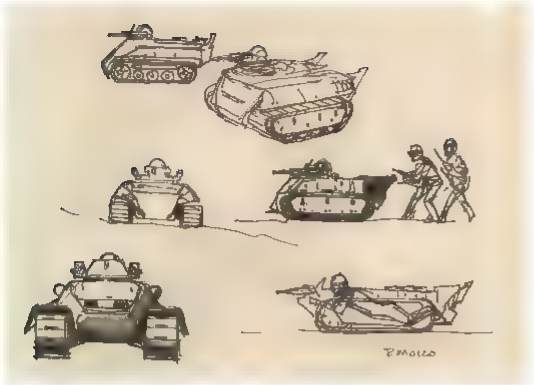


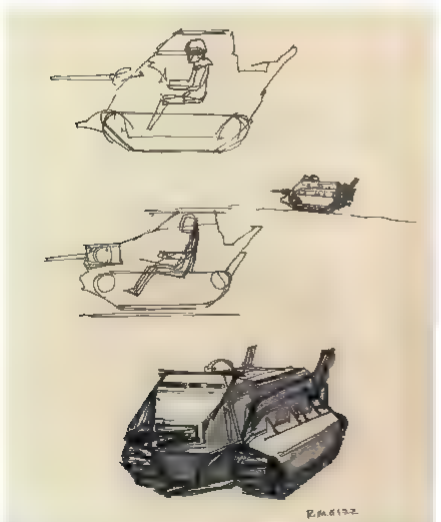
FROM *STAR WARS* SEQUEL SCREENPLAY BY LEIGH BRACKETT, FEBRUARY 23, 1978

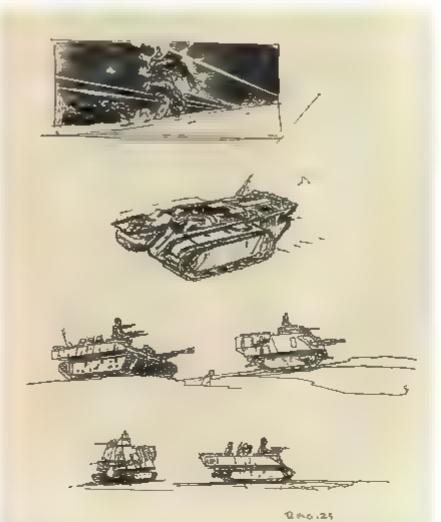
EXT RUINED CITY–DAY: Out of the clouds a strange group materializes, tall noble-looking warriors who carry a pneumatic dart weapon. They are white-skinned and white-haired. They ride through the sky on creatures that resemble pale giant manta-rays.

"The aliens in the city should be semi-stone creatures. Think of them as tall, thin, white ethereal aliens. Very noble creatures, but threatening. They carry a spear or pneumatic dart gun, a long tube, or a long pole with a beam that comes out of it." LUCAS

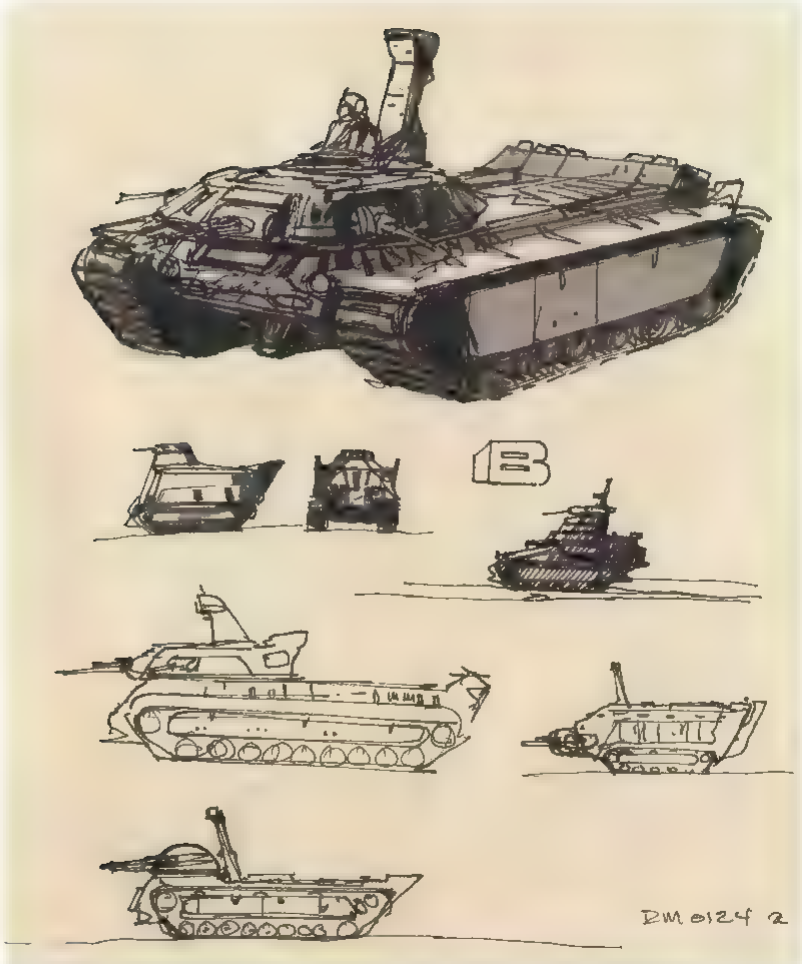
4–9 Concept sketches, Cloud City aliens







"I would like to be as good a hardware designer as Joe Johnston, but he filled that niche and that was a good place for him. He would ultimately partner as well as can. We are two different people but we're quite similar in many ways." MCQUARRIE

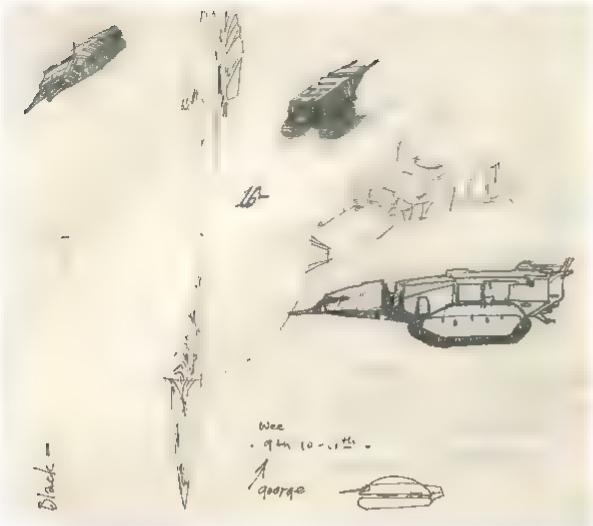


1 Concept sketches, ice planet tanks and soldiers

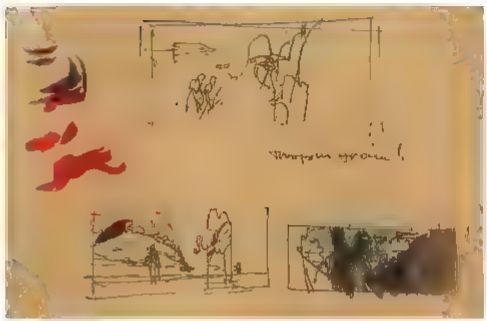
2, 3 Concept sketches, ice planet tanks

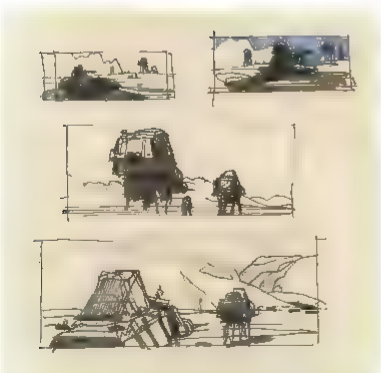
4 Concept sketches (from transparency), ice planet tanks and battle

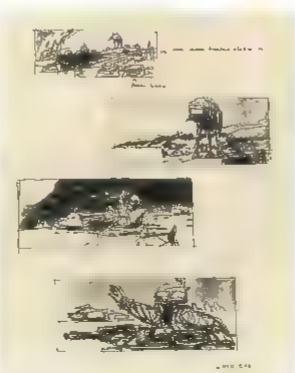
5 Concept sketches, ice planet tanks
The ice planet tanks later evolved into rebel hoverspeeders


Black –
Wes
9th 10 - 11th
George

walker cockpit
front
Pilot
Gunner
turning aft.







"I remember Ralph did a sketch of a snow walker . . . Everywhere you look it's covered with ice but the belly of the walker is orange. I said, 'Ralph, where did this color come from?' He said, 'You know, the way you guys designed the walker, the bell of it is usually a light tan.' (Ralph was so careful. He always got it right.) So Ralph says it's reflecting the ground. I said, 'Ralph, what ground? It's covered in snow.' And he said, 'Yeah, but your eyes tell I believe that the ground is warm because of the warm orange on the belly of the walker.' Suddenly a McQuarrie becomes a mood, but it should be like that. If he had reflected a cool color the image would not have snapped it would have just been bland." **BOBBY AMERO**

Concept sketches, tanks and planet

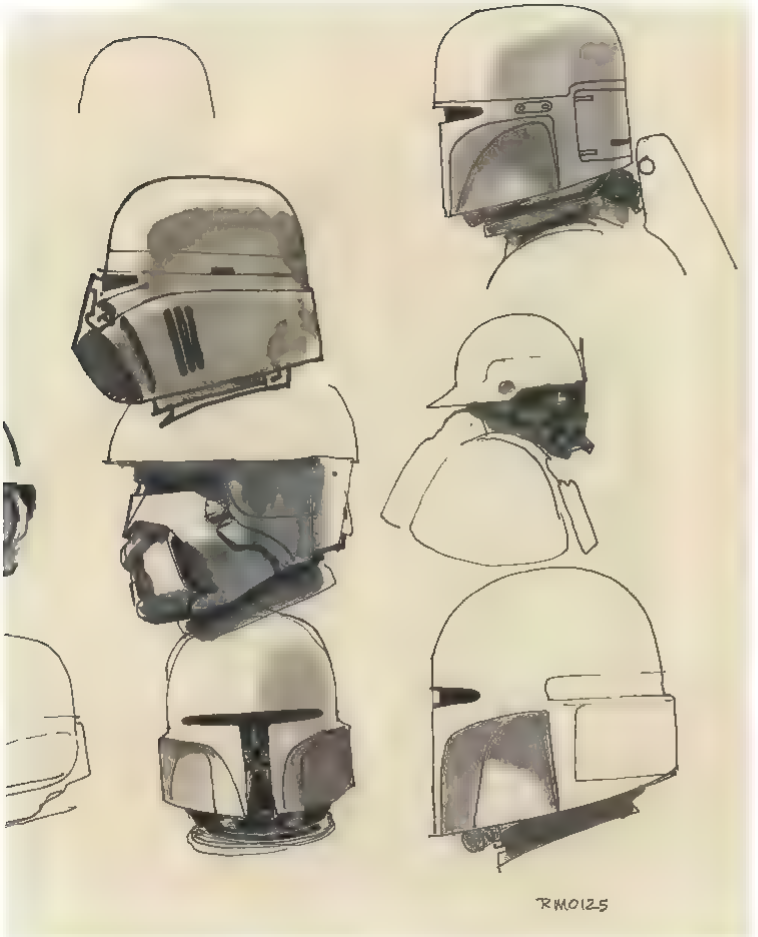
2 Concept sketches, ice planet walker and cockpit

3 Thumbnail sketches, troops battle walkers

4 Thumbnail sketches, rebel tanks and Imperial walkers
Artist, by the shamrock at its top, shows the rebels crushing the imperials in tanks rather than overpowering them.

6 Thumbnail sketches (from transparency), ice planet battle
These thumbnails show effects in color, letting the Imperial walkers.

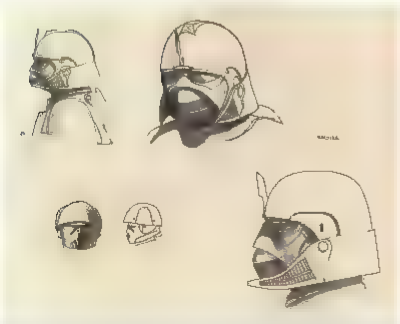
7 Concept sketches, two-legged walking machine
These sketches are unusual . . . but McQuarrie's exploring concepts for a two-legged walking machine at the last time by creating new ones, which is almost unheard of in the industry. Thumbnails at right.



"Ralph and I worked on preliminary designs. And we traded ideas back and forth. Originally, Boba Fett was part of a force we called superstormers; they were these really high-tech fighting units, and they all looked alike. That eventually evolved into a single bounty hunter." JOHNSTON

1–3 Concept sketches, snowtrooper commander helmets

WONDERFULI



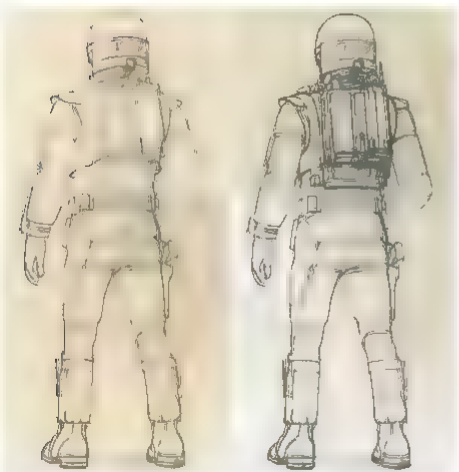
6 Concept sketches, Imperial helmets

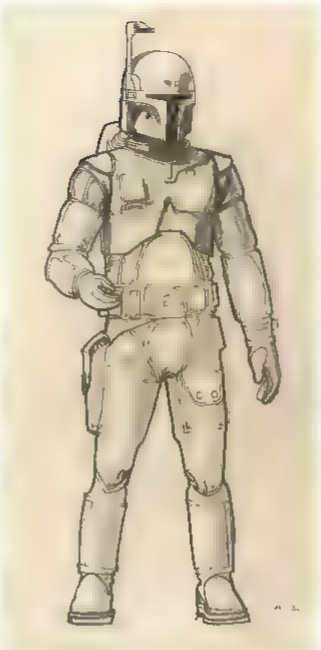
7 Concept sketches, snowtrooper as snowtrooper commander

8 Concept sketch, supertrooper

Mr. Justman [sic] and Mr. Lee believed [illegible] a design for the snowtrooper commander—a supertrooper—an updated snowtrooper [illegible] the Boba Fett type. Stick.

Edit: While the helmet item is accurate as Mr. Quarry [illegible] the rest of the costume was developed by the fabricator.





"George wanted to get him away from a stormtrooper a little more, so he wouldn't look like a storm-trooper. He was looking for a character that would be a super-warrior, that has all these gadgets on him and Boba Fett or the costume seemed to suggest a good basis for that character. I made a painting of showing three views of Boba Fett. Where I think I handle the pants and a few details of it best—I think the overall shape just didn't come out too well." McQUARRIE

Drawings for production illustration (upper and lower layer), Supertrooper

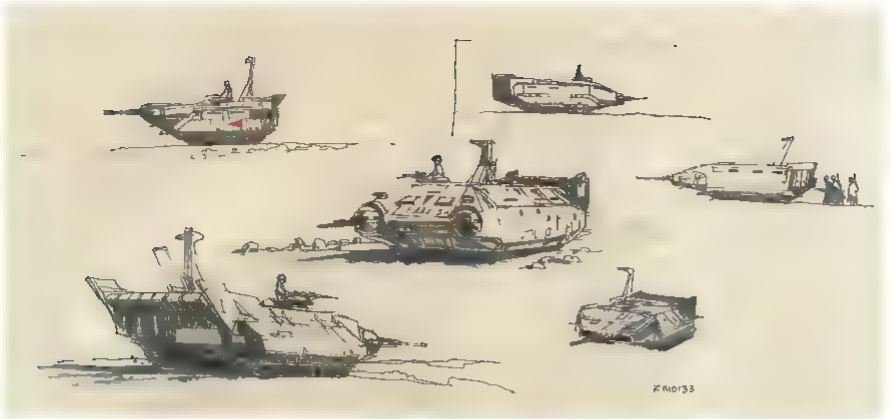
Drawings for production illustration (with additional backpack overlay), Supertrooper

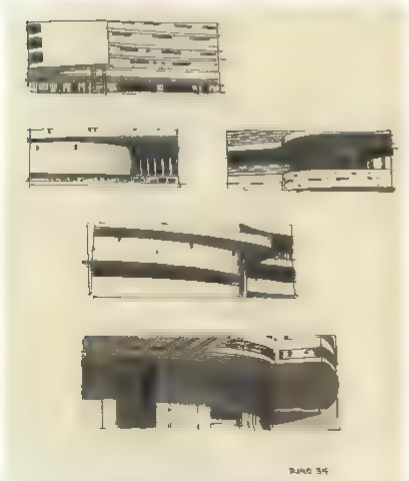
Drawing, Supertrooper

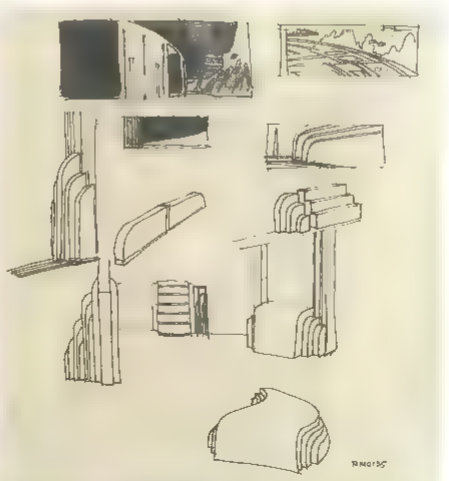
Magazine called details of the helmet, such as both the decorative and the practical, and the markings applying a chosen few, partially to some of the Boba Fett.

The supertrooper/Boba Fett costume, having been manufactured by the art department at Elstree Studios, was debuted for key Lucasfilm employees in San Anselmo on June 29, 1979.

Drawings for production illustration Supertrooper







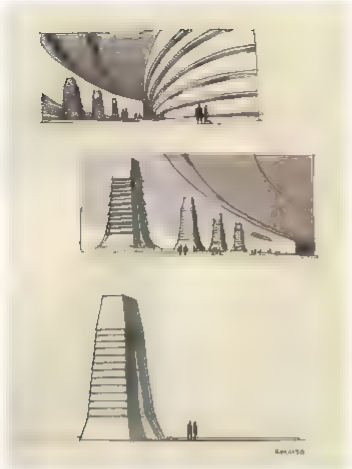
3

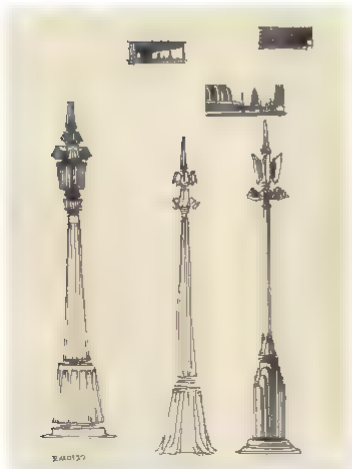
3 Concept sketches, ice planet tanks

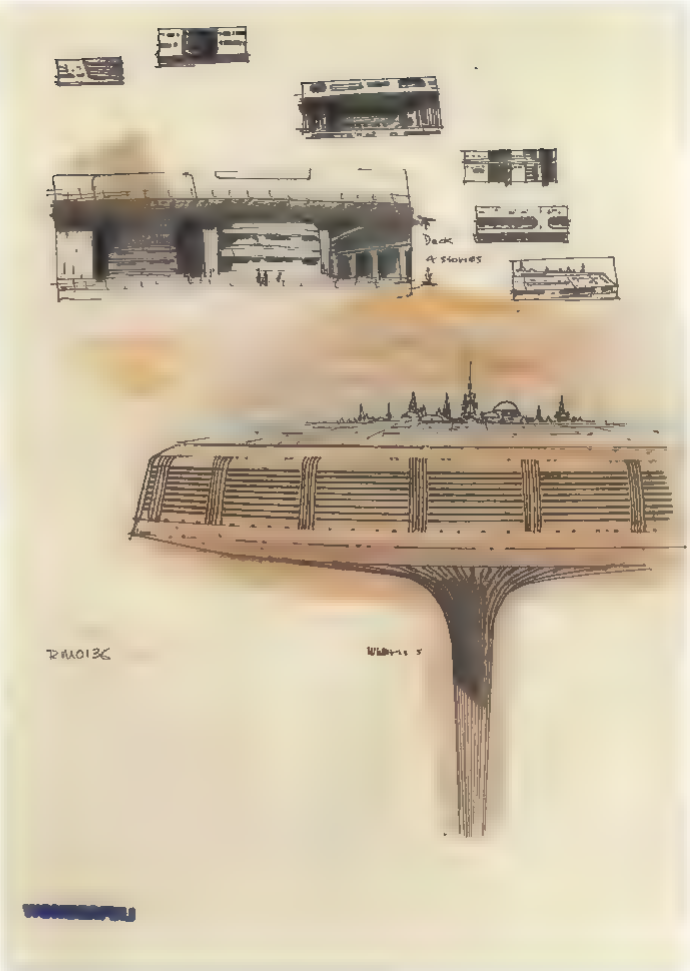
4 Concept sketches Cloud City architecture

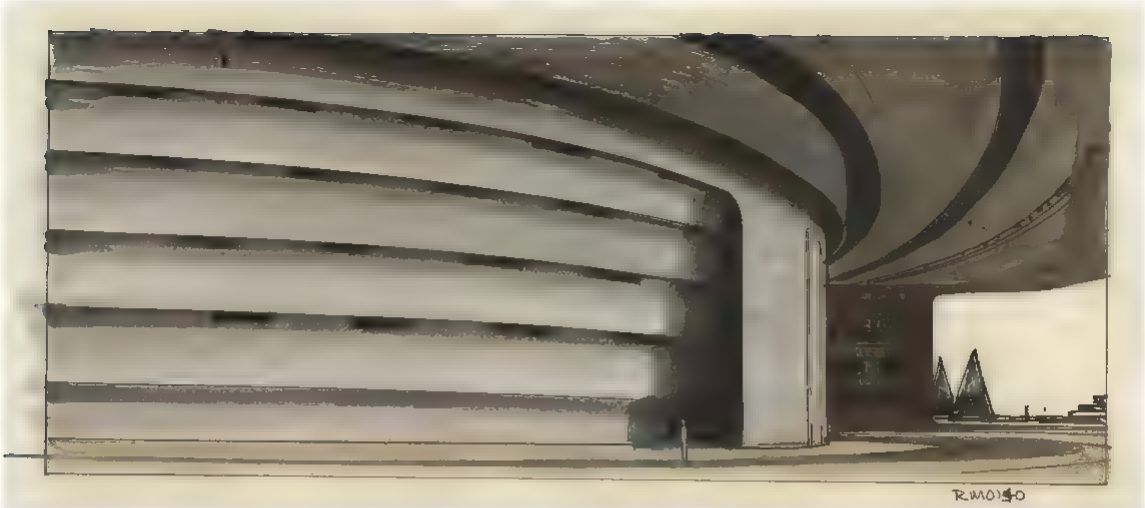
5 Thumbnail and concept sketches, Cloud City architecture

Mixed media on paper (6–8)






Deck
4 stories



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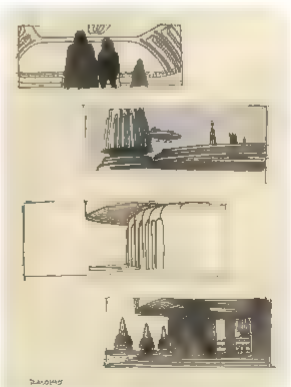

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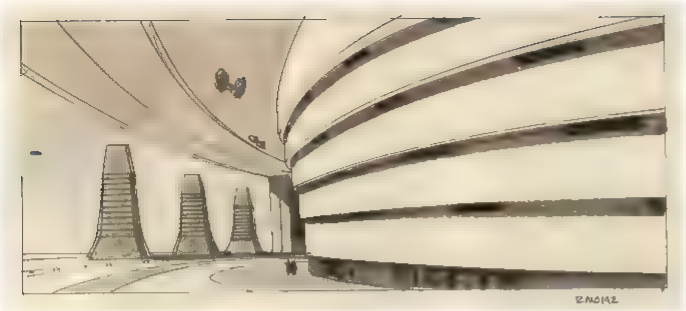
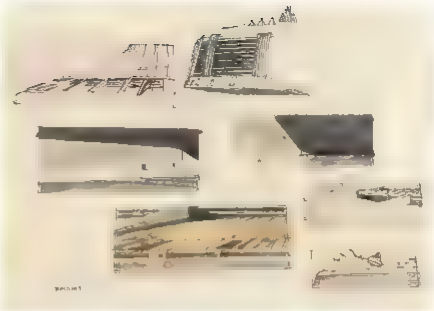
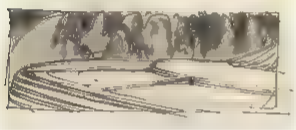
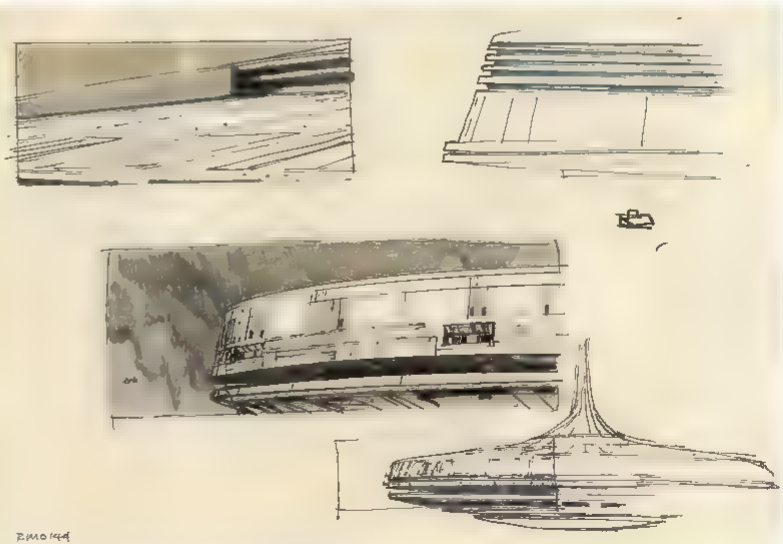








"Cloud City ought to be this pristine place. My original concept of it was gray, but that seemed to look a lot like the Death Star, which turned out to be gray, and it seemed we needed to change it, and bright colors didn't seem to suit it so white or off-white seemed to be the color." McQUARRIE

4 **Concept sketches**, Cloud City exterior
Many of McQuarrie's Cloud City studies incorporate pyramid structures, though they did not make it to the finished film.

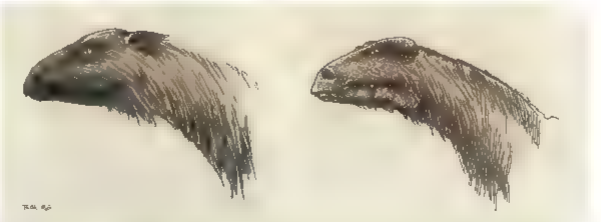
7 **Concept sketch**, Cloud City interior hallway

8–9 **Concept sketches**, Cloud City exteriors

Both Joe and I did sketches for the creature. I started off with a dinosaur kind of look, but George wanted it to be a two-legged critter. Joe gave it a birdlike quality. Both of us left it at that point, and Phil Tippett took over. We all contributed our bit to it, but he was the one who actually did the model work on the creature. It looked very good, even in close-ups." MCQUARRIE

"It was Lucas's decision to have something more organ[illegible]looking than a guy fitted into a suit. The final consideration was to get something that looked like a thing unto itself, rather than an object that looked dead or artificial." PHIL TIPPETT

FOR MORE ON ANIMATION



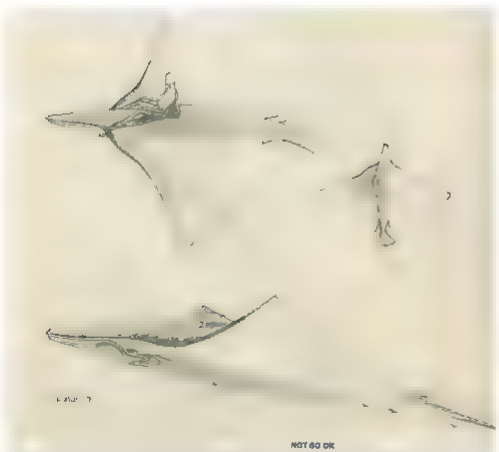
a. Concept sketches, tauntaun and rider

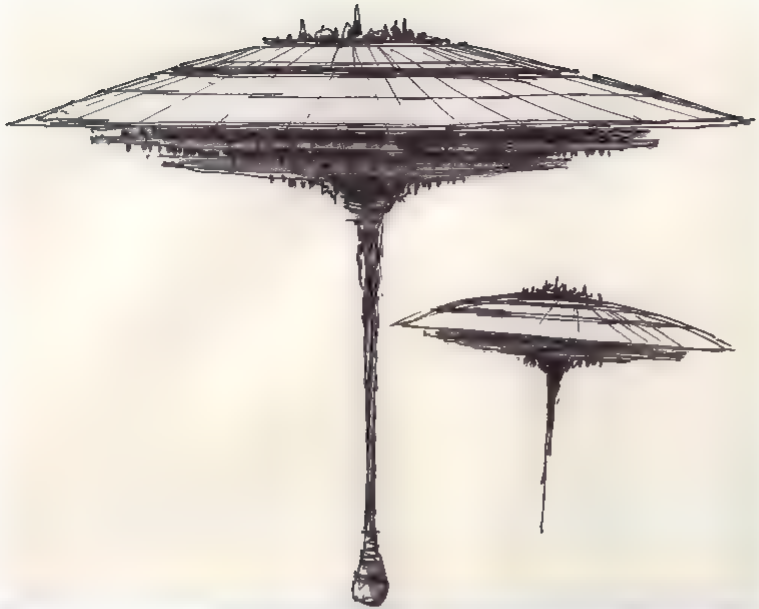
b. Concept sketches, tauntaun heads

c. Concept sketches, Cloud City flying creatures and cloud car vehicle

[illegible] used a reconfigured form [illegible] design. "As always, [illegible] was necessary to be more flexible in his work, making some of his conceptions fit [illegible] constraints. [illegible] concepts for the flying beasts and vehicles on Cloud City [illegible]

Concept sketches, Cloud City flying creatures





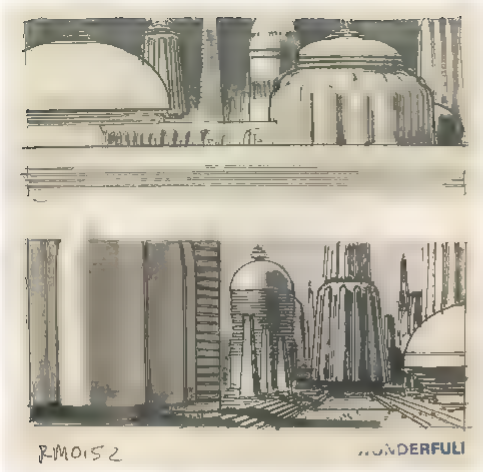
'Cloud City is something we worked on in the first picture and didn't find room for, but everybody liked. Be painting it has a little bit of the look of an aerial carrier floating in this wonderful, gray, cloudy scene with giant cumulus clouds pouring out, all covered in lights with spaceships and so on. It seemed interesting enough to get into the picture and a plot was written around it in a way." McQUARRIE

Concept sketches, Cloud City

4 Thumbnail sketches, Cloud City architecture

5, 6 Concept sketches, Cloud City

7 Concept sketch, Cloud City ventilation shaft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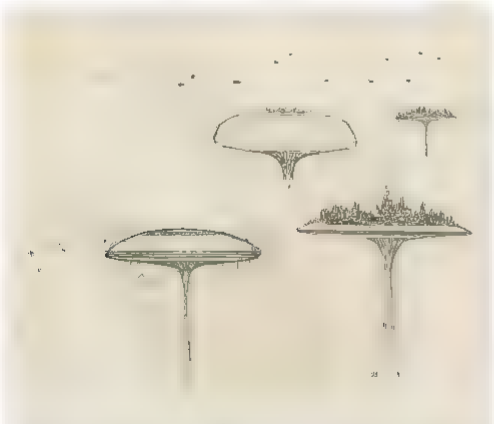
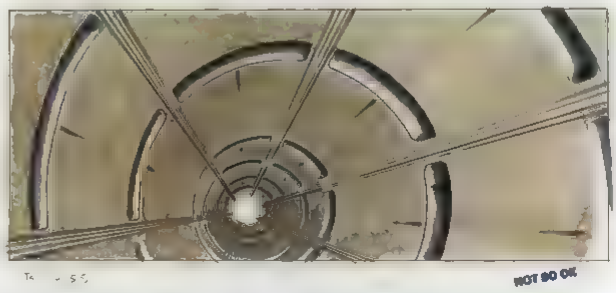
WONDERFUL!

RM0152
WONDERFUL!

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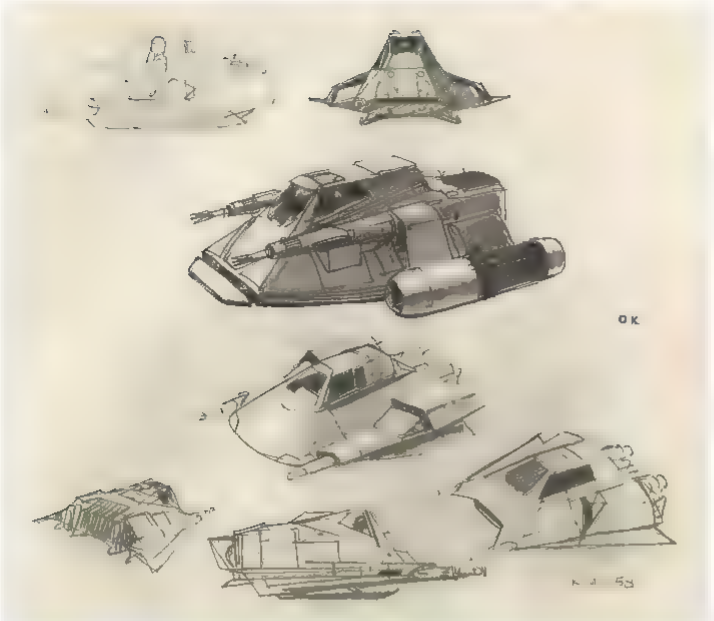
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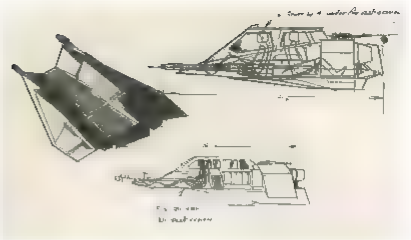
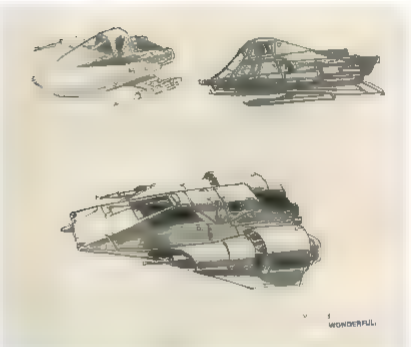
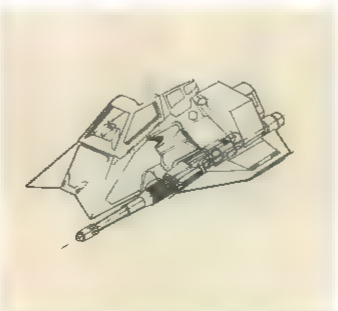
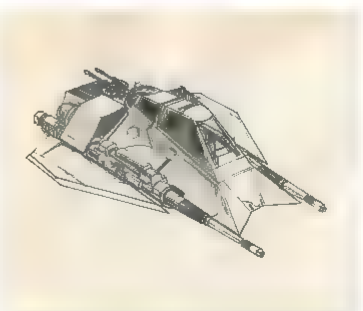



WONDERFUL



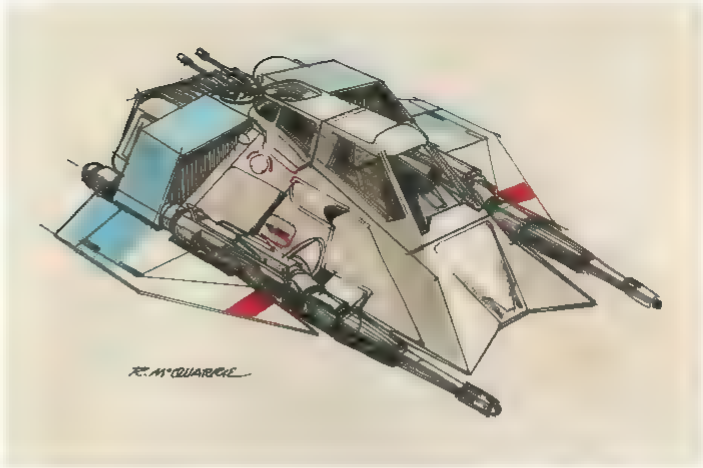


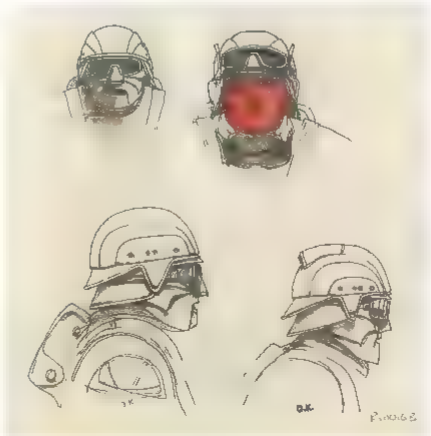
"During the time we were working on the snow battle we were looking for vehicles for the rebels to use against these big walkers. We were thinking about tanks, but then I thought these speeders would be more interesting so they could fly. I thought of the Henschel twin engine tank buster that the Germans used in WWII with this little sight cockpit and four big 20mm cannons which fired forward. An airplane with heavy armor on it fascinated me. I thought it would be kind of like that but a speeder like the one Luke used on Tatooine, an armored speeder. George liked that idea so we went to that.

"In designing the snowspeeders, I tried to stay away from the James Bond look of hardware. Joe Johnston and I had different concepts about them originally. He had a feeling that they were indigenous craft, something the rebels had taken over when they got there. Joe took my basic design and really improved it. He came up with a frontal construction that worked very well." **McQUARRIE**

"Ralph's designs were always as simple as he could make them. I think this is probably a result of his years illustrating aircraft. He never put anything into his designs that looked like it didn't have a purpose. There are plenty of examples of that kind of cross-pollination of ideas, which made the design process work. I think George instinctively engineered the process this way, letting Ralph work at home in Berkeley so we would only see his work every few weeks, after we had a chance to generate new ideas from the last visit. The best example is probably the rebel snowspeeder from *Empire*. Nilo [Rodis-Jamero] and I had been generating designs that looked factory built or repurposed from other ships. I did one that used the Y-wing cockpit as the speeder body. Ralph came up with the idea that the rebels built the speeders themselves and so had to construct them out of all flat panels with no compound curves and no styling. This idea sent the design into a whole new direction that made sense within the story and resulted in one of the most unique of all the original trilogy designs." **JOHNSTON**

Star Wars is all designed. Everything that is in there is supposed to work." **LUCAS**





7 Concept sketches, snowspeeder

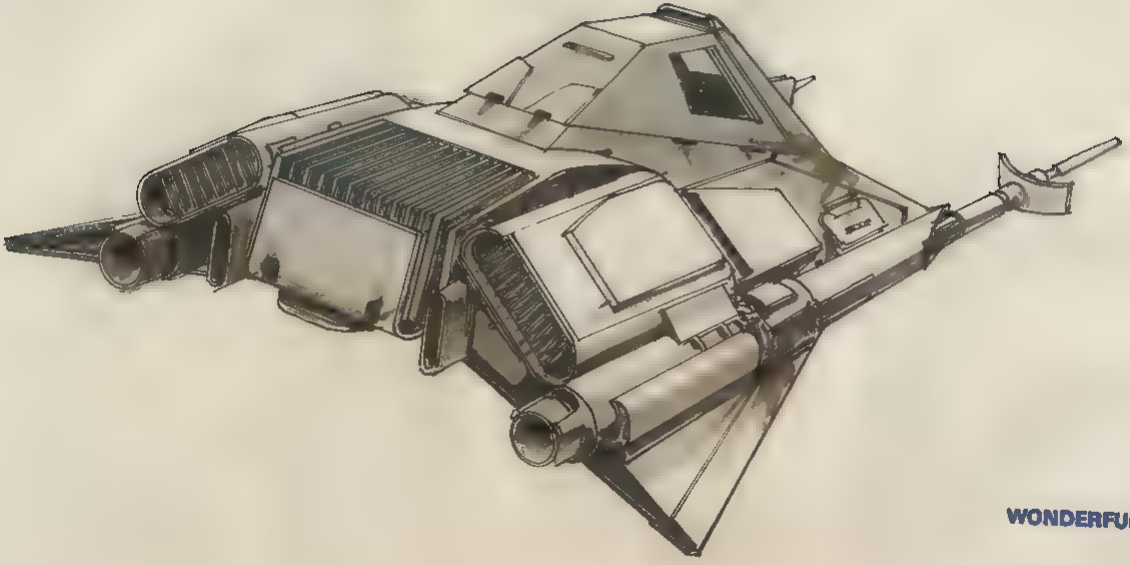
11 Concept sketches, ice planet rebel helmets

9 Costume sketches, Luke, ice planet snowsuit

Ralph McQuarrie's production work consisted of many pre-production drawings and storyboards of Luke in his snow outfit.

10 Concept sketch, tauntaun and rider

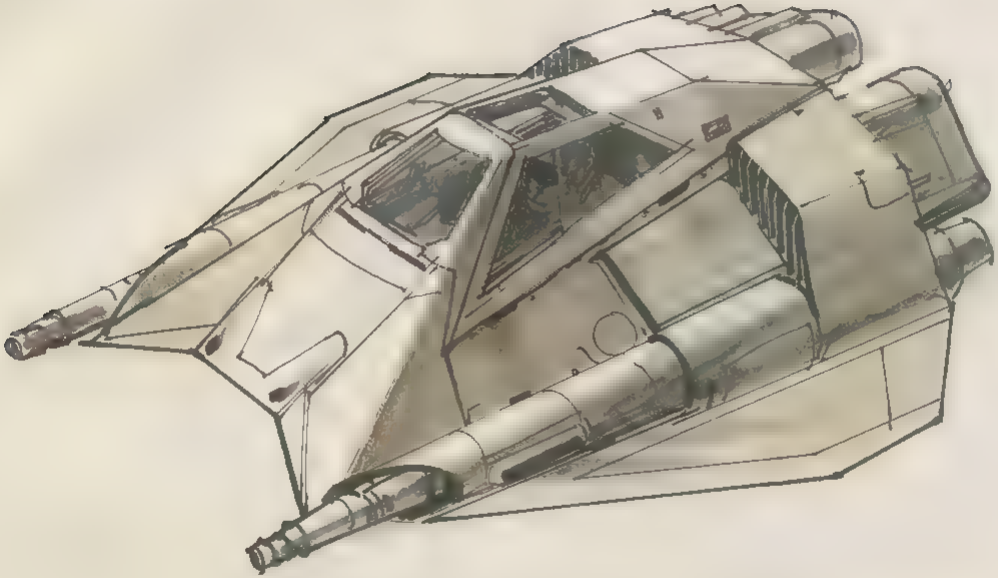
2 COLLAPSIBLE SPEEDER Concept sketches, snowspeeder



WONDERFUL!

RM0157

WONDERFUL!



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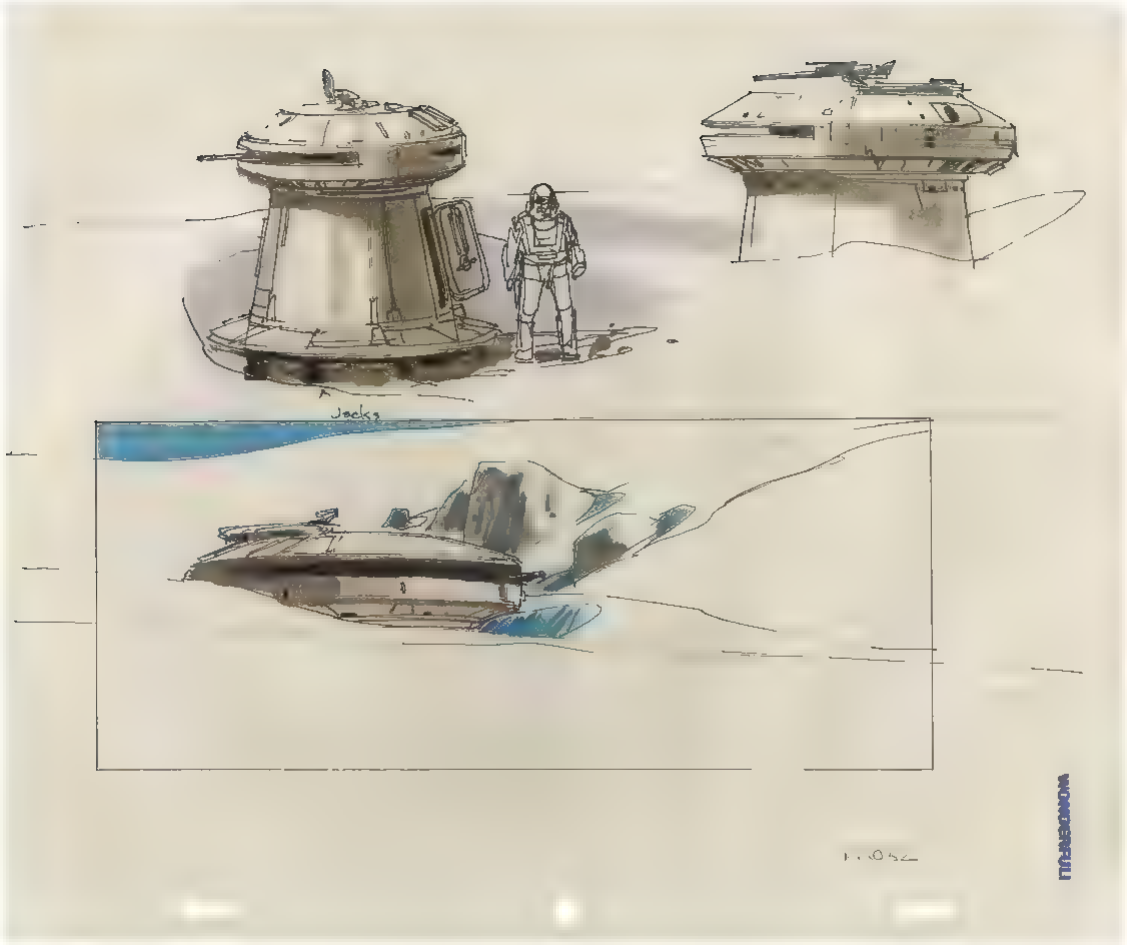
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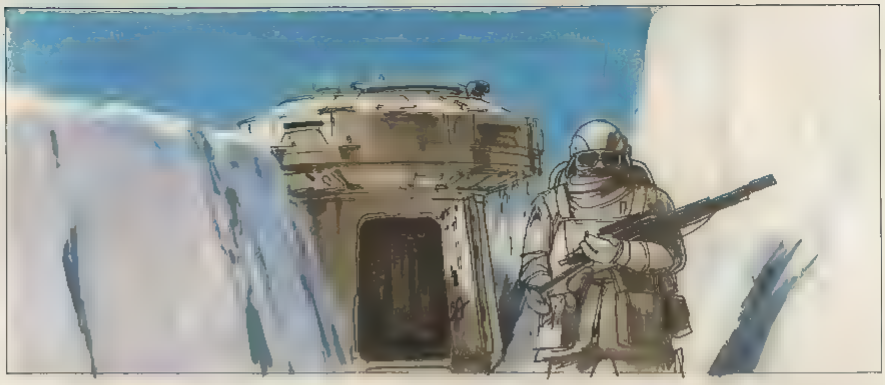
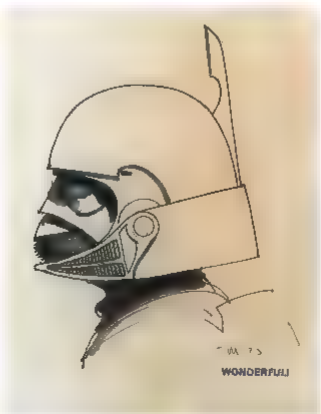
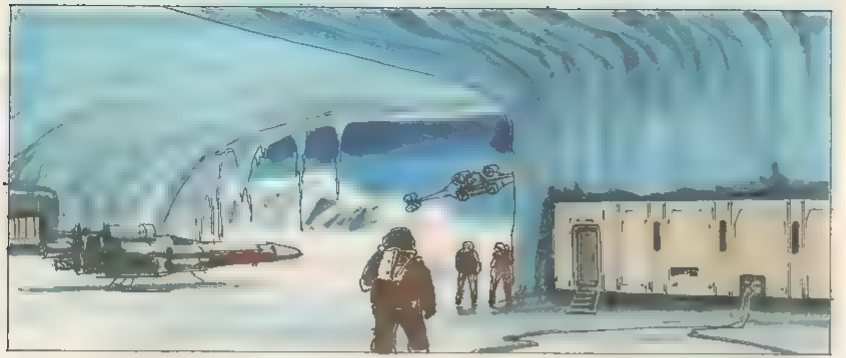
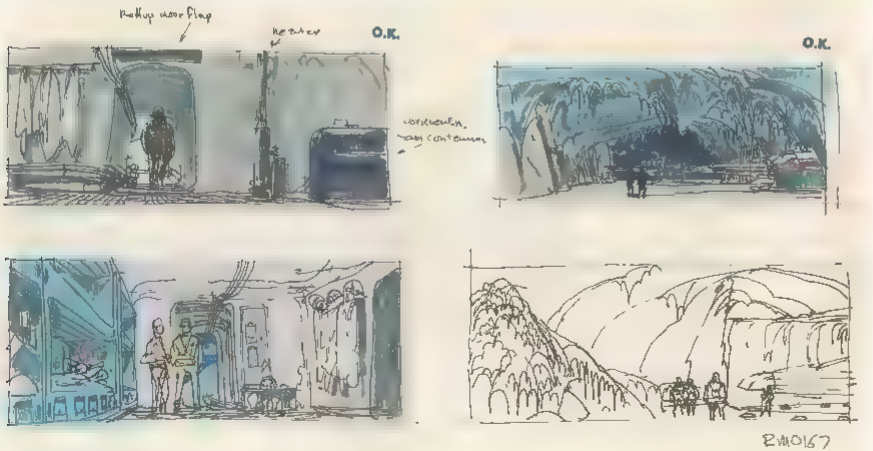




1. Concept sketches, ice planet gun turrets
2. Concept sketch, ice planet turret with rebel trooper
3–4. Concept sketches, snowtrooper profile
5. Concept sketch, snowtrooper (see page 301 or 91)

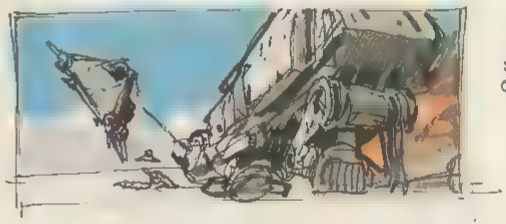




Concept sketch, ice planet rebel hangar

Thumbnail sketches, ice planet rebel base interiors

Thumbnail sketches, ice planet battle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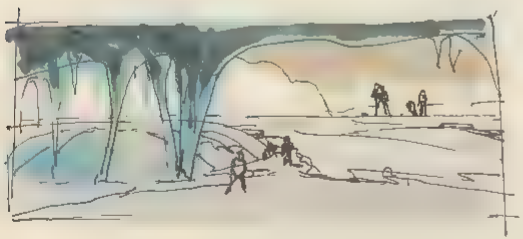
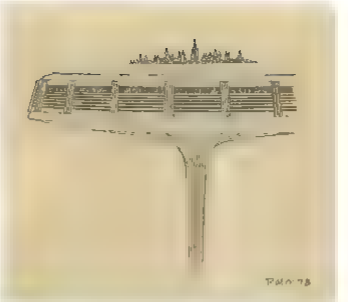
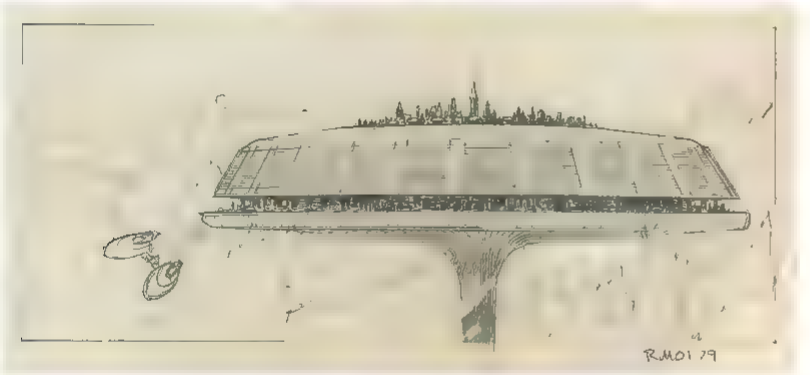




"I don't really know what a city in the clouds could mine anyway. Maybe gas...it's just a very picturesque and beautiful location. There are a huge number of people who work in there and live in there. It's like a strata of society in there all the levels, from steerage up to first class. First class is up on top.

"...also saw Cloud City as being a very old place. They have very old buildings, just like Earth cities. Cloud City could have been a whole lot of different things during the course of its existence." "...don't think that we thought of *Star Wars* particularly as a view of the future. It was just a view of another world, you know, another society that we were creating, and it might possibly be an older one. It might have occurred in time that's just outside of supposedly all Earthly references except almost everything is related to Earth." McQUARRIE



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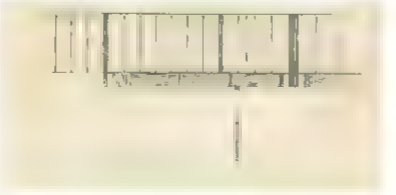


4

Concept sketches for production illustration, Cloud City (see page 252 [3])

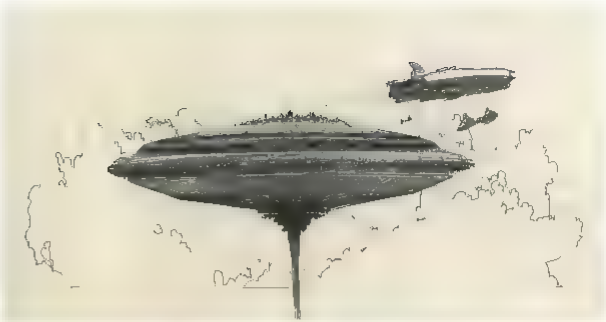
4 ...oncept sketch, Cloud City exterior, February 2, 1978

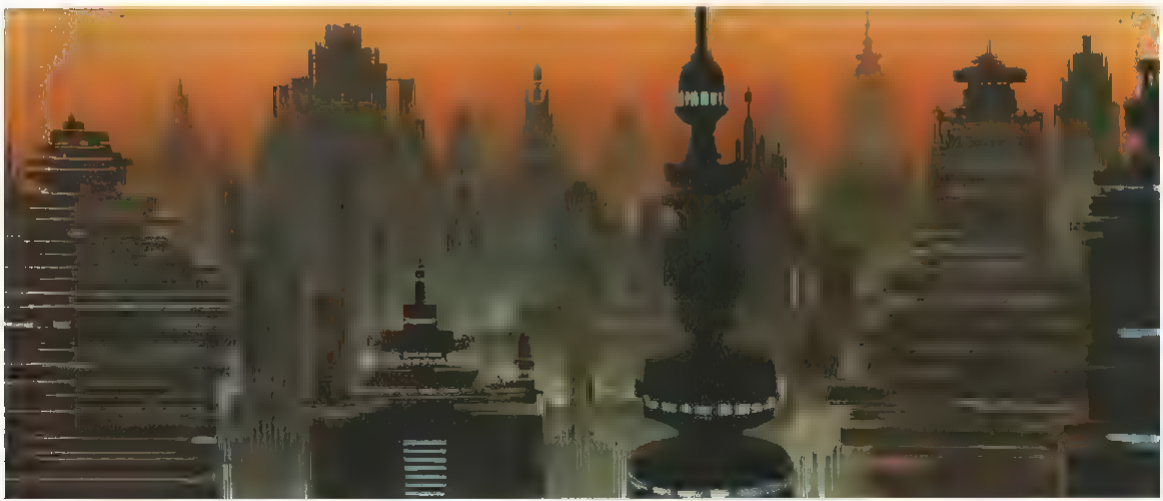
...ere are a number of McQuarrie Empire art pieces that may sometimes share the same title. They may have been dated when the prints were there in order than when they were in art

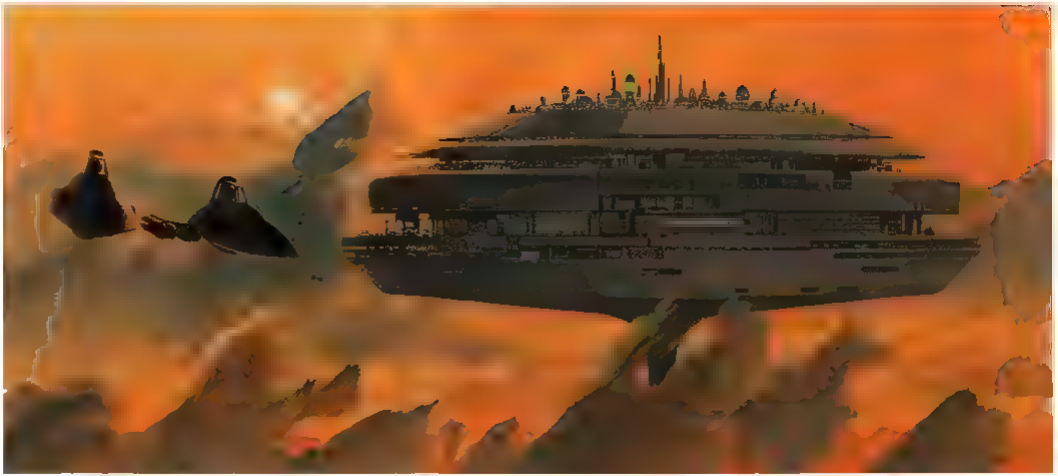
Concept sketch, Cloud City detail

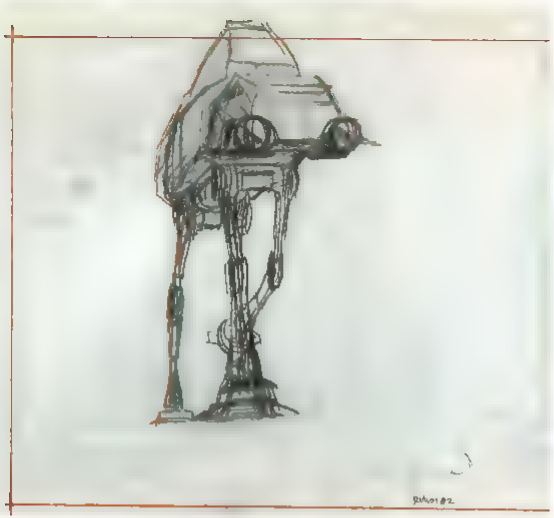
Concept sketches, Cloud City

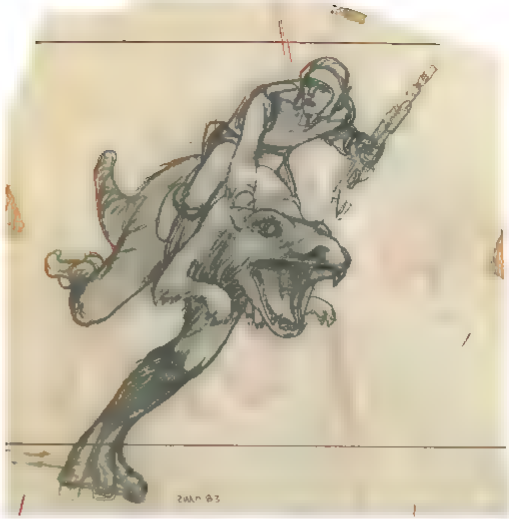
3 Preliminary illustration, Cloud City architecture











"Those [illegible], are big cannons on the snowspeeder. They are supposed to be like a tank gun. You can fly out and fire at another armored vehicle and supposedly burn through the armor." MCQUARRIE

1 Drawing for production illustration, imperial walker (see page 263 [illegible])

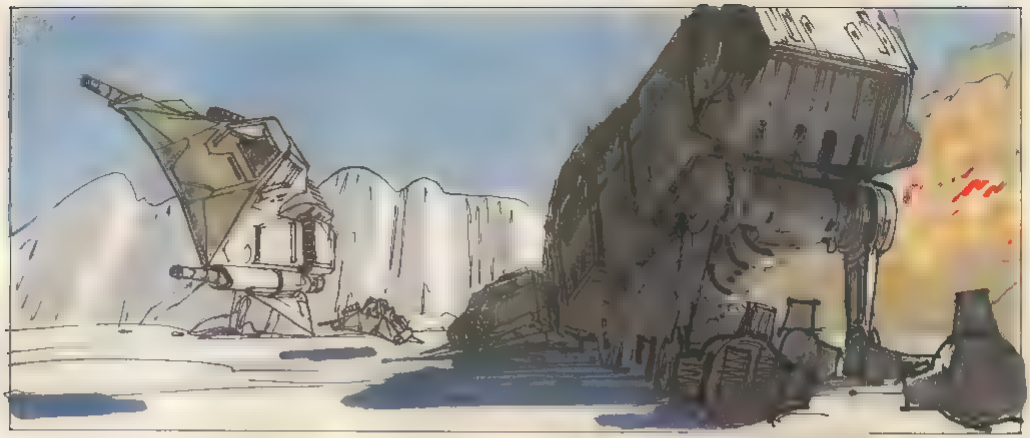
2 Drawing for production illustration, tauntaun and rider (see page 263 [illegible])

Costume sketch, Luke's ice glacier snowsuit

3 Concept sketch, tauntaun and rider

Concept sketch, snowspeeder and downed walker, February 2, 1978 (see page 265 [illegible])

4–5 Concept sketches, snowspeeder, February 1, 1978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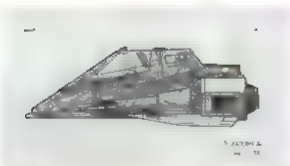

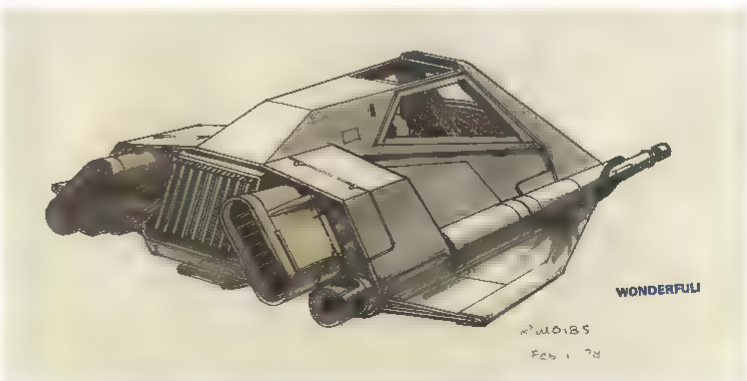
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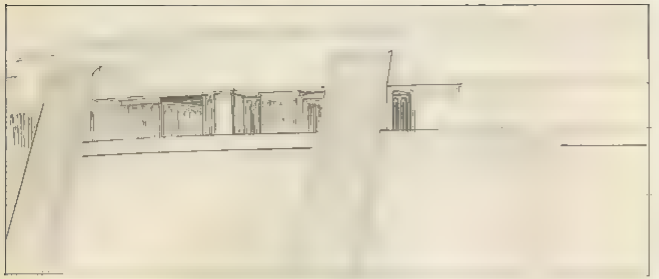
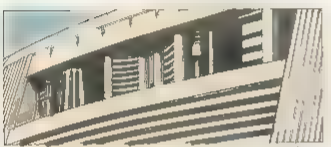
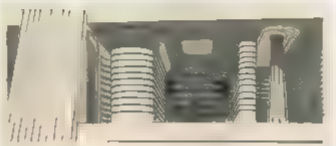
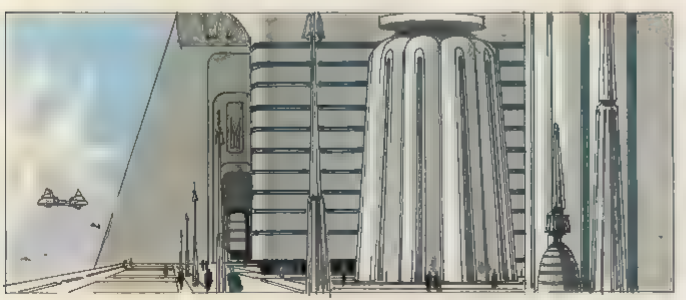






envisioned a photograph of a great [illegible] square filled in front of St. Peter's in Rome, and above the people would be the matte painting. The actors would have to be photographed against a blue screen to make a mask to hold them out, and then they would be combined with the matte painting. A rear projection setup or with an optical printer. Buildings in the average city on Earth are square, and this is not an Earth city so I didn't make them square." MCQUARRIE



Concept sketch, Cloud City windows

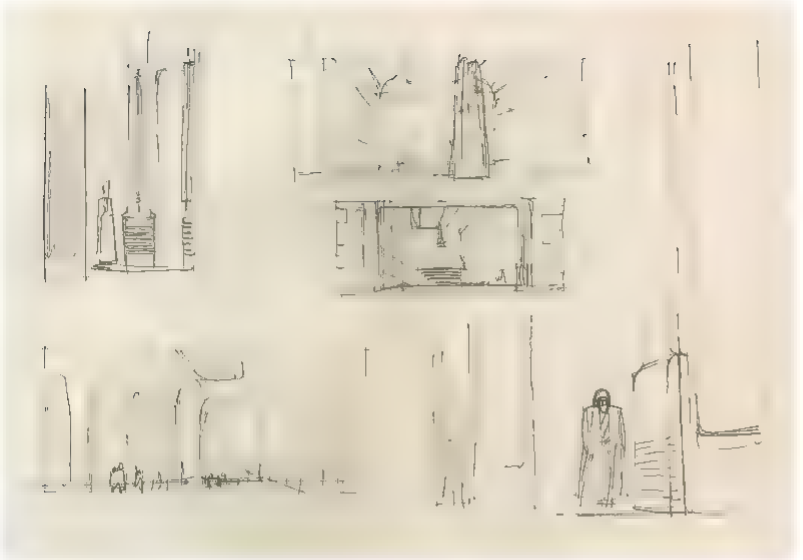
3 Concept sketches, Cloud City windows, February 2, 1978

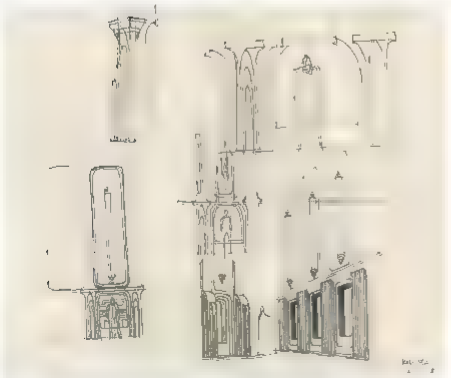
4 Concept sketch, Cloud City architecture, February 2, 1978

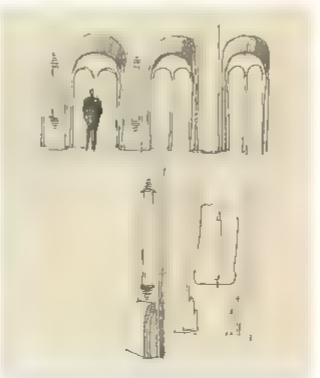
5 Drawing for production illustration, Lando and Leia in Cloud City

[illegible] on four separate pieces of yellow tracing paper, mounted on illustration board

6 Production illustration, Lando and Leia in Cloud City, April 13 and 20, 1978







1 **Thumbnail and concept sketches,** Cloud City interiors

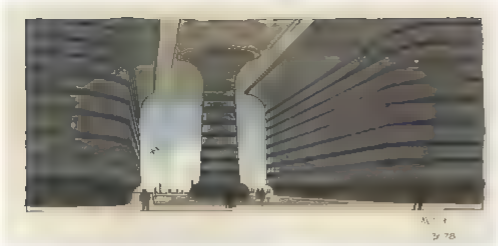
2 Concept sketches, Cloud City interiors, February 3, 1978

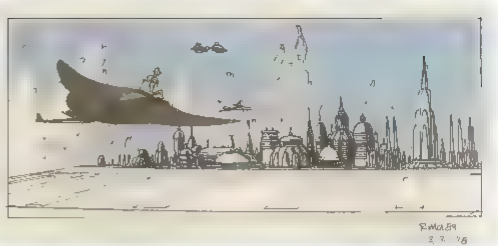
3 Concept sketches, Cloud City interiors

4 Concept sketch, Cloud City architecture, February 3, 1978

5 Concept sketch Cloud City and flying creature February 2, 1978

6 Concept sketch, Cloud City, February 3, 1978





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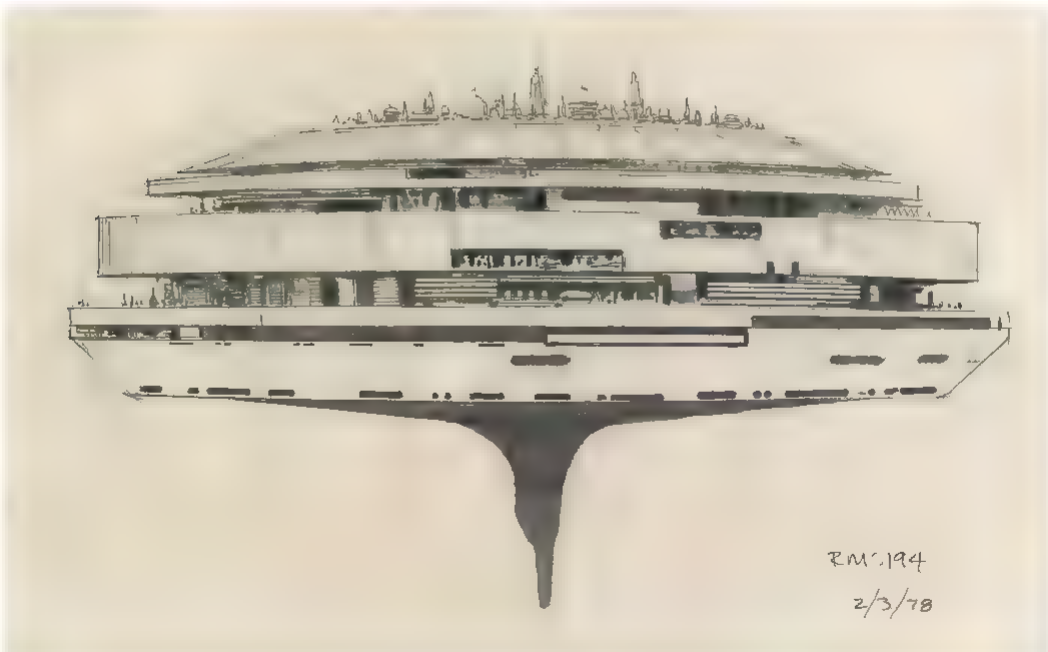

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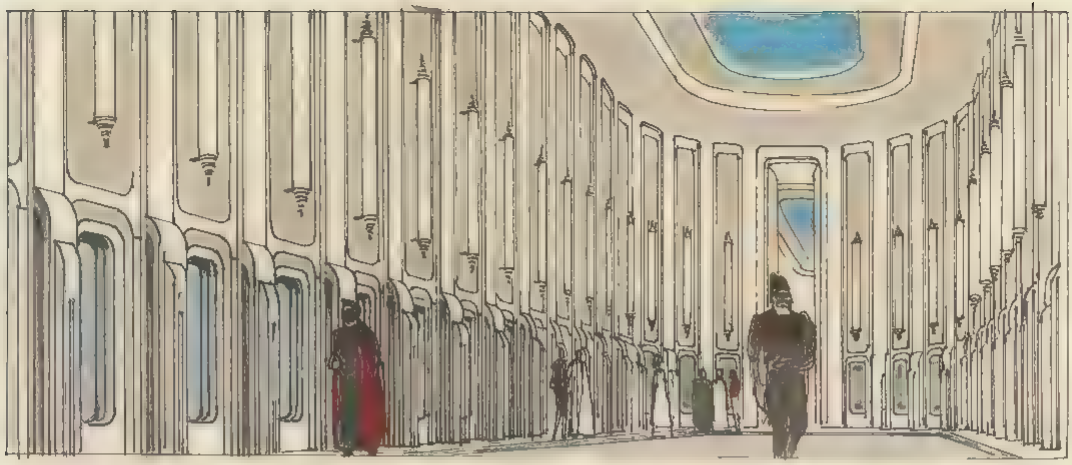


"The space ramp [1] is based on a sketch I made of the great ha[ll], which was typical for Cloud City. I made a whole lot of drawings of typical Cloud City spaces without thinking in terms of it being a special room for a special purpose and that room seemed interesting. It was one of these great impressive halls like the Reichstag was in Germany. There's a place for this big long table where Lando and the good guys meet the bad guys for the first time here at Cloud City." MCQUARRIE

Concept sketch, Cloud City great hall, February 3, 1978

[illegible]

Thumbnail sketch, Vader's dining room

3 ▲ Concept sketches, Vader's dining room

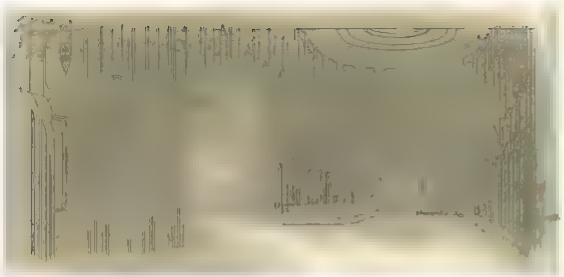
5 Drawing for production illustration Vader's dining room

[illegible]

Drawing, Vader's dining room

[illegible]

Production illustration, Vader's dining room



7

"The canyon was interesting to me could have put the scene out on the flat land but felt that this would be a good place to be. It would justify the proximity of these big monster machines with the man on the mountain. The tauntaun looks like it's a real thinking type of creature. I hoped I had given him a personality. He is angry and frightened, and he has a great mouth full of teeth. I thought he was going to be quite a frightening character, and that was George's feeling, too: they should be really frightening and yet they will obey commands if you handle them right, but he's potentially a very vicious animal." McQUARRIE

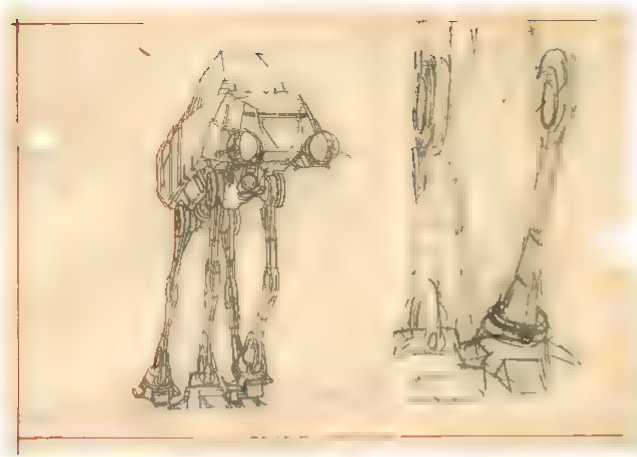
"Ralph McQuarrie's conceptual paintings in particular give you the total feeling of what George is after. The key to all of *Empire* and how it looked was the fantastic outpouring of McQuarrie and his conceptual sketches, which were like photographs taken on a set. It made certain jobs easier. Joe Johnston and Nilo Rodis did the rest."
BRIAN JOHNSON, SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR

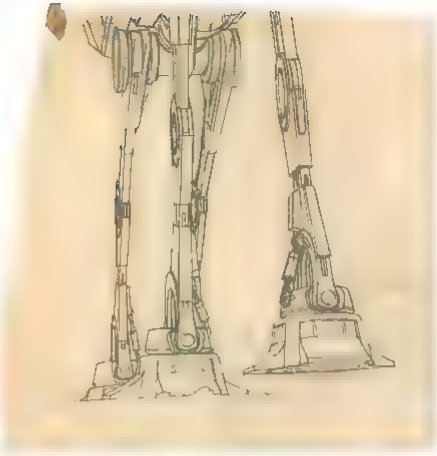
4 "Thumbnail sketches for production illustration, "Rodent mount"

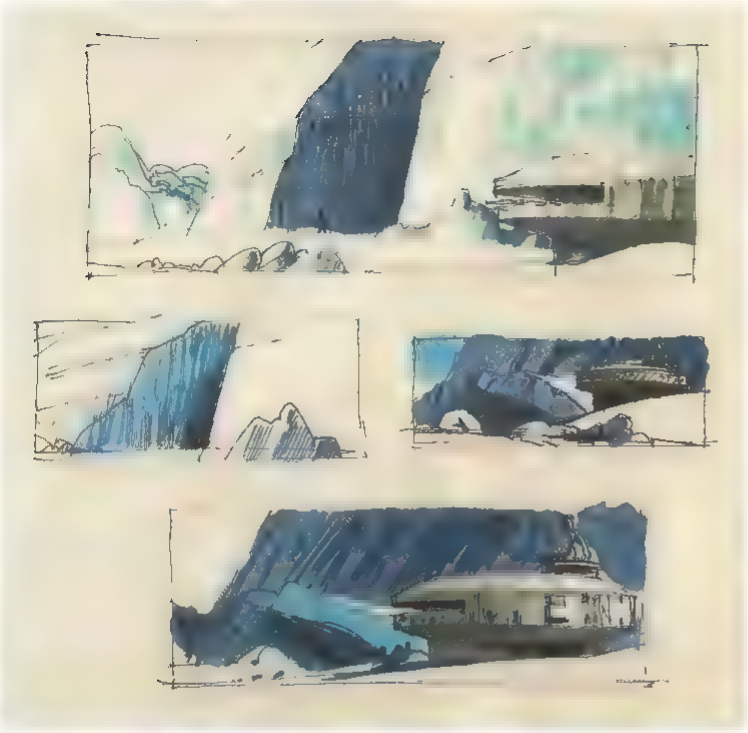
Concept sketch for production illustration, "Rodent mount," February 6, 1978

6–7 Drawings for production illustration, "Rodent mount"

5 Production illustration, "Rodent mount," February 9–10 and 13–14, 1978
"An initial concept for [illegible] design for the Imperial walker [illegible] stage of development."







It just didn't seem logical that there would be a cave and just a little low hill or something, so I thought there should be a big cliff. I put it in the shadow to give myself an opportunity to play with the snow against this dark form. It would be much less interesting if this were all just a hazy white sky up here.

I dug up as many photos as I could on glaciers. Ice is so strange. It tends to look like stone or concrete or just about anything but ice most of the time. Oddly enough, it depends how the light hits it. I had been using Mount Everest reference photos. These little bumps in the snow are very odd, but they actually appear that way on Everest. The ice melts and then gets covered with snow again, melts and so forth." **McQUARRIE**

I had made a lot of sketches of various aspects of the battle and views of the speeders flying around with the walkers. I just picked one of them that I had made (see page 249 [3]), and George thought it was interesting, so we did a painting. It's the first of the snow battle scenes that I did, and it seems like I thought of us looking in to the cliffs that contain the cave that the rebels are in.

"When it came to doing the front of the snowspeeder—and it seemed like I should have the front view here—it just didn't look right, and I never did resolve the design. But Joe Johnston did it. He solved the problem by putting bigger wings on them that made them look better." **McQUARRIE**

Concept sketches, rebel base exterior

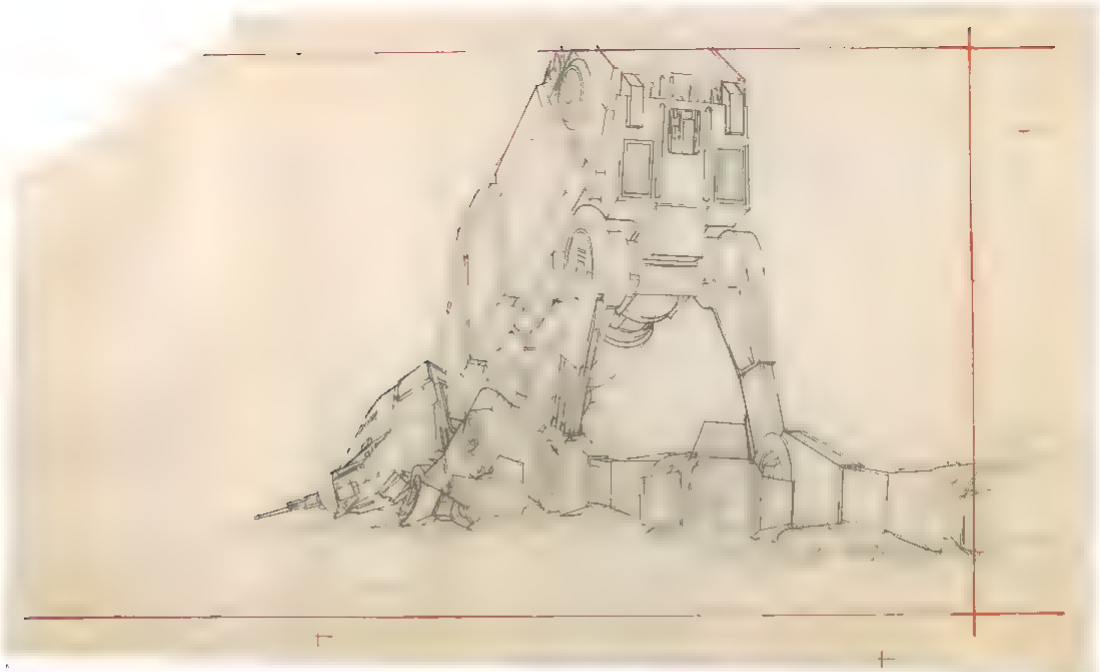
Concept sketch, ice planet fountain pen, April 7 1978

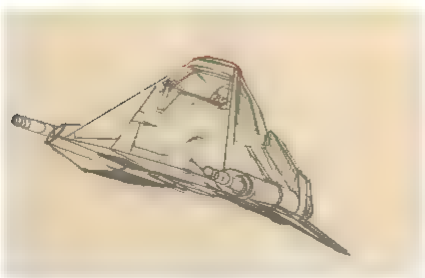
4 Concept sketches, entrance to rebel base, April 7 1978

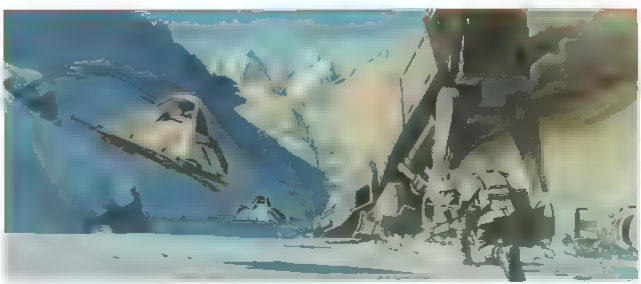
5–6 Drawings for production illustration "Armored landspeeders bring down walker

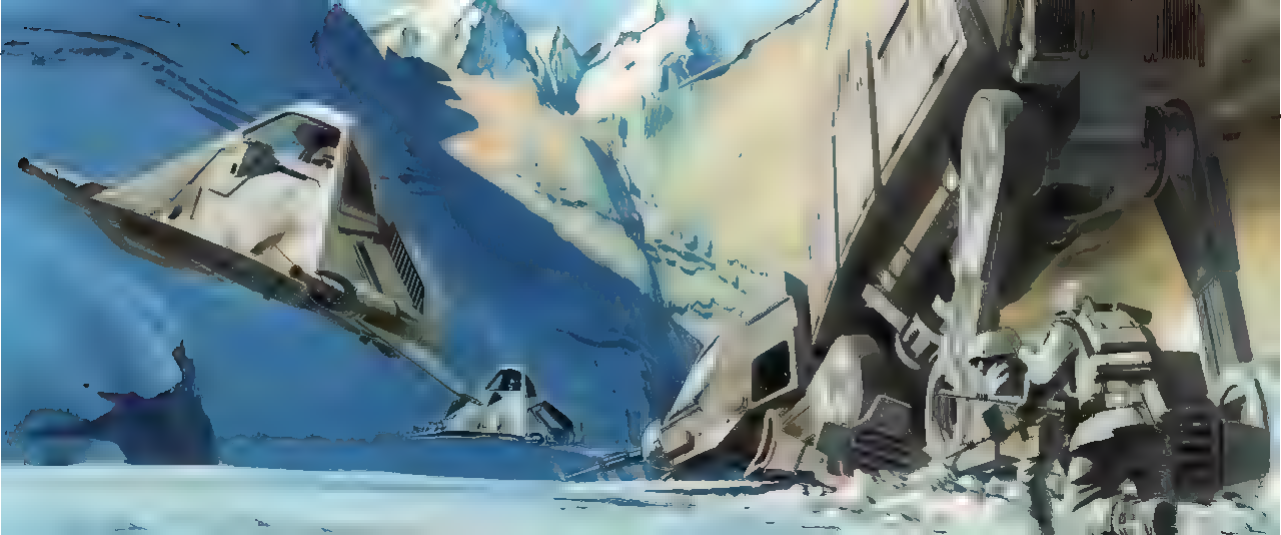
Production illustration "Armored landspeeders bring down walker," February 20–22 1978

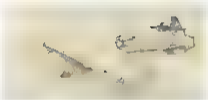
O LOOKING AHEAD Detail from production illustration "Armored landspeeders bring down walker," February 20–22, 1978

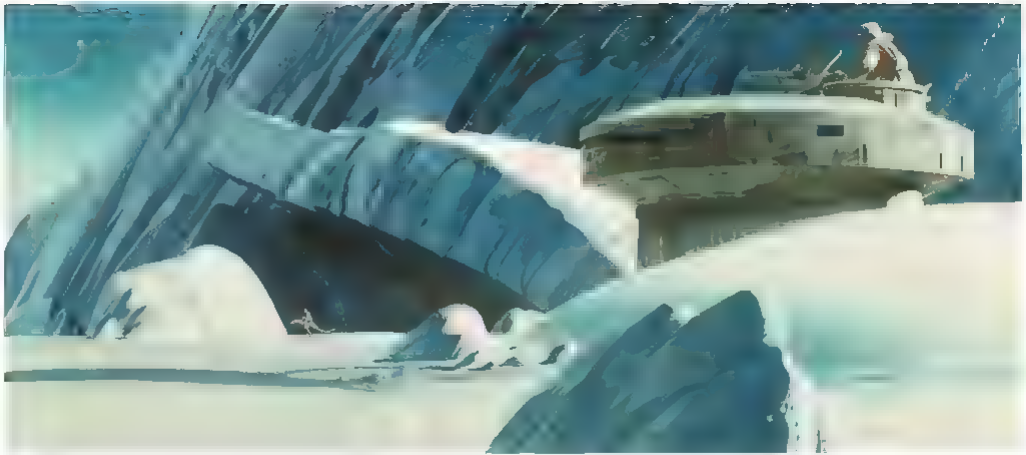


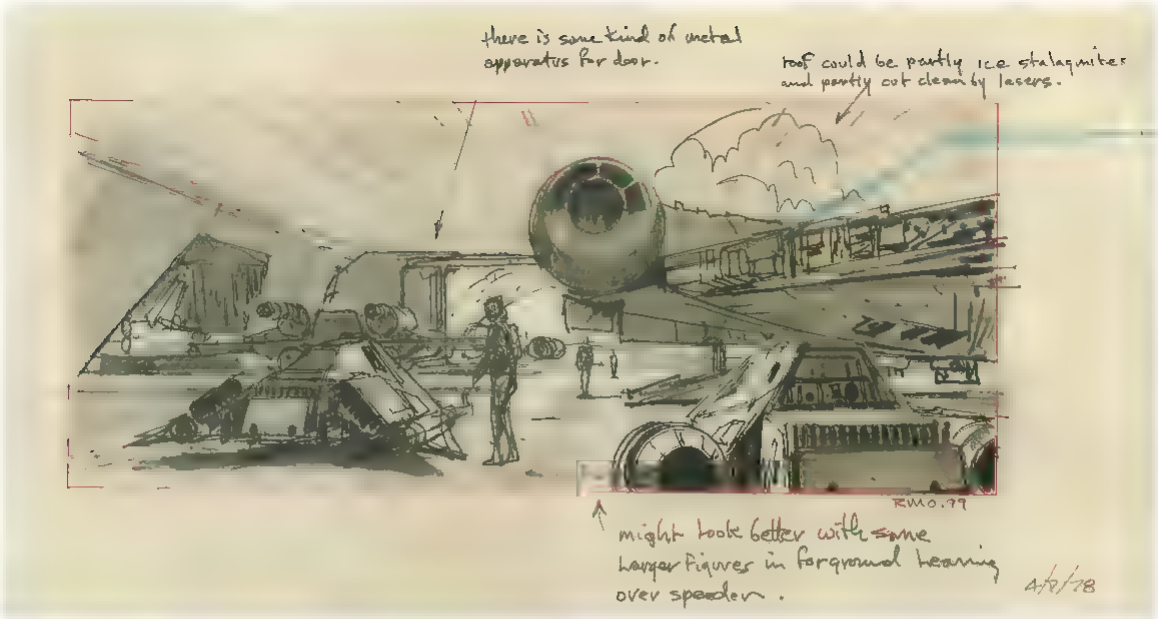


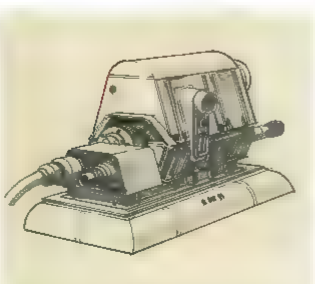









there is some kind of metal apparatus for door.
roof could be partly ice stalagmites and partly cut clean by lasers.
might look better with some larger figures in foreground leaning over speeder.
4/9/78



"I've painted a number of ice cave illustrations, and the one of the two fighter pilots suiting up is possibly my favorite. The perspective and the positioning of the two snowspeeders make this one a bit more dynamic than the others, though it still reveals much about the set itself. If you look carefully in the background of the ice cave hangar [1], you'll also see an early version of the tauntaun.

"I got a reference picture of an actual cave that had been cut out of the ice during World War II. I don't know where it was, but it was really quite large.

"When George saw the painting, he told them, 'Do it like this.' The way this scene was actually built—on a stage—it had a huge, circular opening above the set where we imagined daylight would come through—much like a dome without a roof. They modeled a lot of ice for the sets by putting up big blocks of Styrofoam and using hot wire to sculpt out these forms." McQUARRIE

1 Concept sketch, ice planet rebel hangar, April 2 1978

2 Thumbnail sketch, ice planet rebel hangar and concept sketch snowspeeder

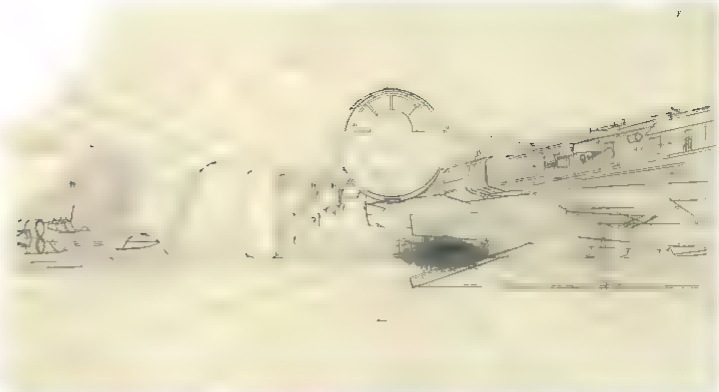
3 Concept sketch, ice planet generator

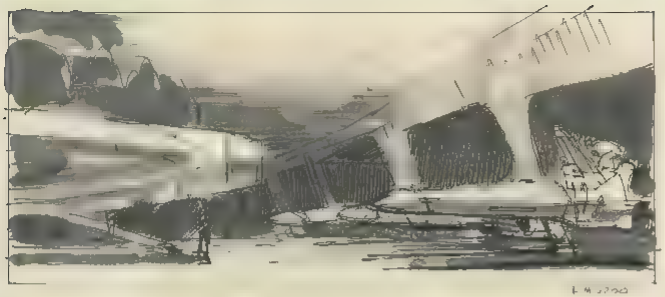
4–6 Drawings for production illustration, "Ice Cave"

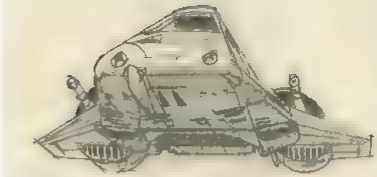
7 Production illustration "Ice Cave," April 24–26, 1978

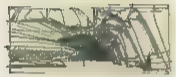
8 [illegible] rebel ice base illustration, six prop[illegible] [illegible] page 103 (6) [illegible] page [illegible] [illegible] and volume 2 page [illegible]

FOLLOWING SPREAD Detail from production illustration "Ice Cave," April 24–26, 1978









The ice cave paintings were important because the film opens with that sequence, and we wanted to work out as many of the visual details as possible. As envisioned by George, the caves are connected by a series of tunnels and corridors cut directly through the walls of ice. Here we are looking at the back of the cave where the tunnel goes out the rear. It's the escape route. The ice caves are natural to the planet, but they've been modified by the rebels to accommodate their ships, with huge sections of ice carved out for hangar space, repair and refueling ports." McQUARRIE

Concept sketch, ice planet rebel hangar, April ? 1978

2 Drawing for production illustration, ice planet rebel hangar

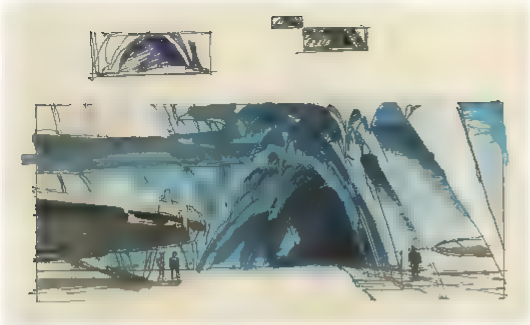
3 4 Thumbnail sketches for production illustration, "Ice Cave" (No. 2)

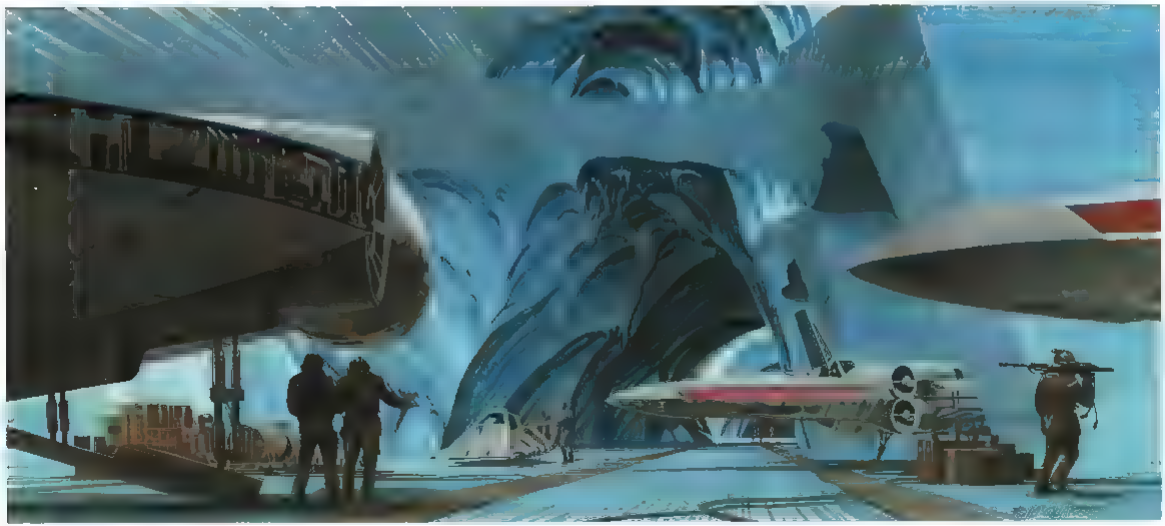
5 7 Drawings for production illustration, ice planet rebel hangar
These drawings on vellum were never used for a completed painting, but show an alternate concept similar to "Ice Cave" (No. 2) [22]. The Y-wing fighters depicted in the drawings was never featured in a final illustration

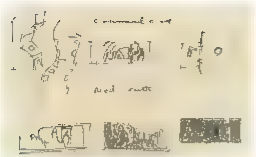
8 Concept sketches for production illustration, "Ice Cave" (No. 2)

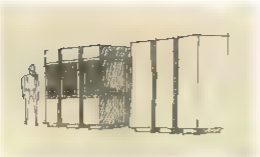
9 Drawing for production illustration, "Ice Cave" (No. 2)

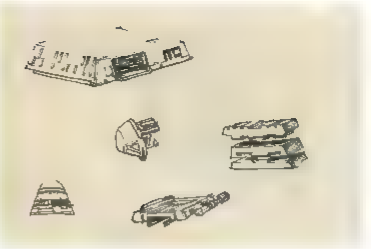
10 Production illustration, "Ice Cave" (No. 2), May 20–24, 1978
McQuarrie's X-wing fighters are painted with the forward landing gear in an unusual position, much further to the rear of the craft than the standard design

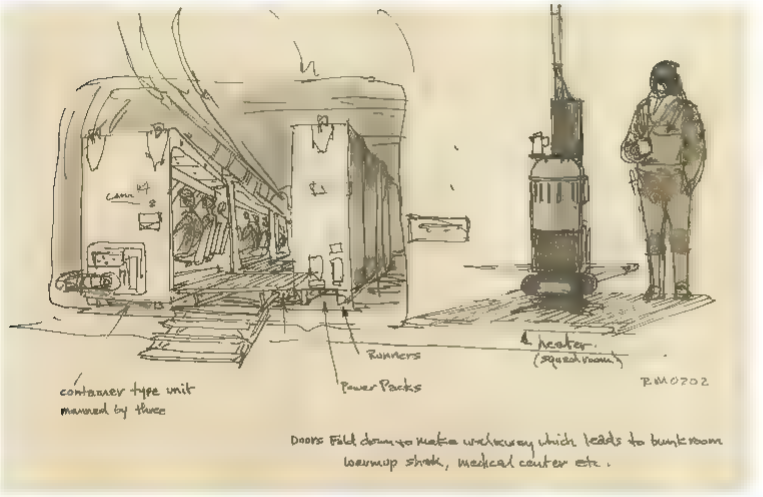








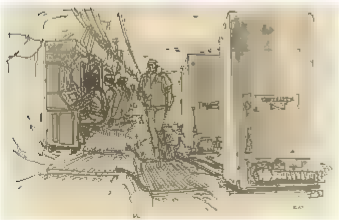




"George said, 'I want a radar room with all these little separate consoles and the ice tunnel.' I could have put a wall at the end, but I just felt it would be much more interesting if you were looking down and it had some depth to it instead of just flat, because this was going to be a complex with tunnels. I thought of daylight coming down in places, and this represents a room into which daylight is coming through a crack in the ceiling. This represents the headquarters—the nerve center of the rebel base in the ice cave—and it has portable equipment because they've brought everything in. This guy in the middle here [Yoda], I kind of borrowed his boots and things from a climber on [Mount] Everest. His feet seemed to be sort of wrapped with cords around loose big boots, and it looked sort of dashing and interesting. I think costume designer John Mollo adapted that in the costumes for the rebels.

"I think George said, 'Put in Artoo and Threepio because it seemed we were doing a lot of stuff and we hadn't included them.'"

McQUARRIE



Thumbnail and concept sketches, ice planet command center

Concept sketches, ice planet power packs

Concept sketches, ice planet flooring

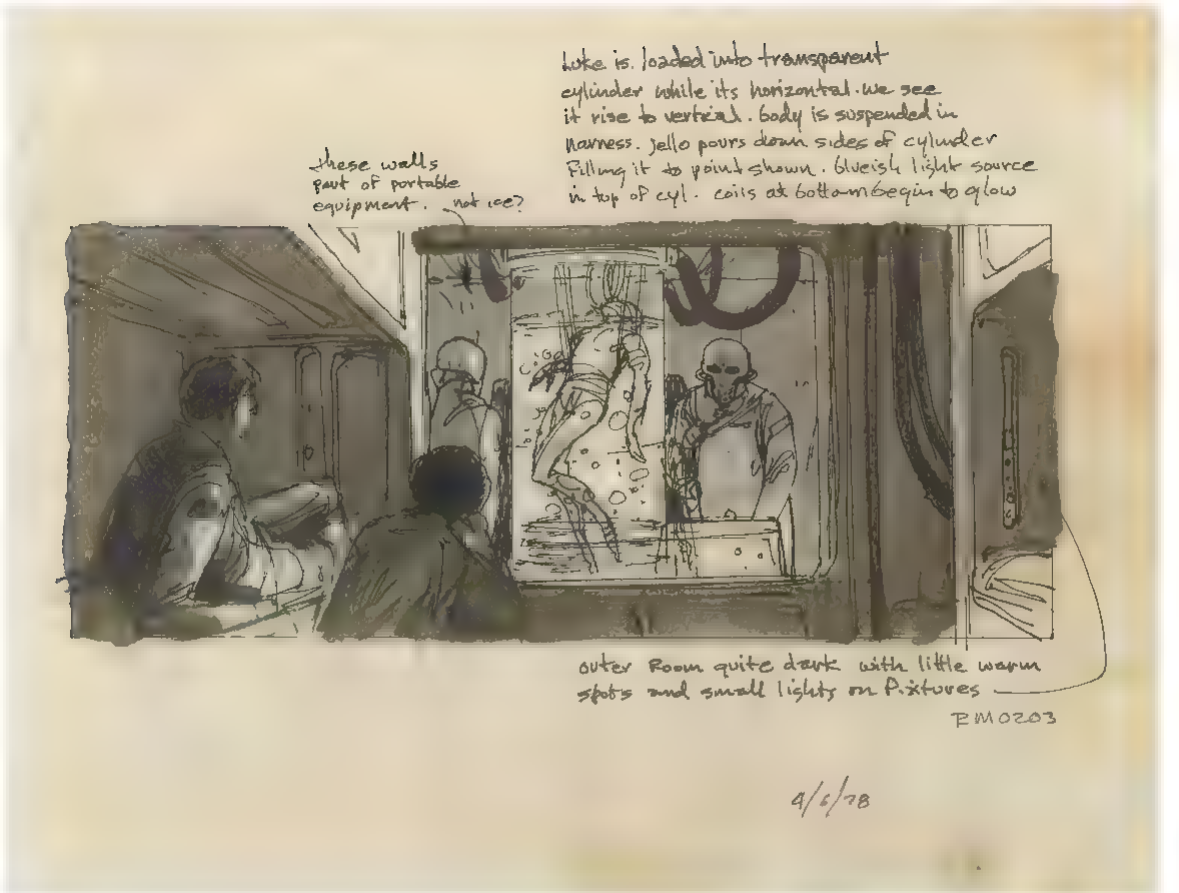
Concept sketches, ice planet command center, April 7, 1978

Concept sketch R2-D2 and C-3PO in ice planet command center

Drawing for production illustration, R2-D2 and C-3PO in ice planet command center

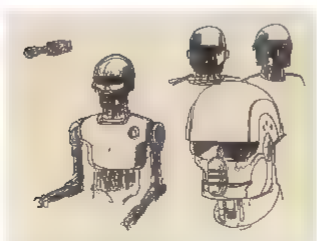
Drawing for production illustration, alternate R2-D2 and C-3PO

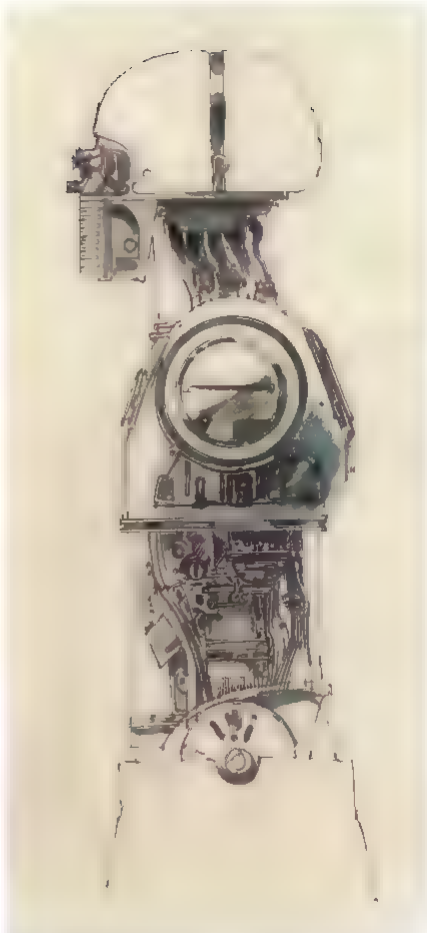
Production illustration, ice planet command center, May 28–29 and 23, 1978


Luke is loaded into transparent cylinder while its horizontal. We see it rise to vertical. Body is suspended in harness. Jello pours down sides of cylinder filling it to point shown. Blueish light source in top of cyl. coils at bottom begin to glow
these walls part of portable equipment. not ice?
outer Room quite dark with little warm spots and small lights on Pixtures
PM0203
9/6/78

"George thought Luke should be suspended in this big tank of red fluid. It was his idea to have the medical man in attendance be a robot. George said, 'Make him kind of spooky and creepy, but everyone trusts him, 'cause he's a real doctor.' I thought the medical robot might have the brain of a human. Part of it would be a human brain inside this case that was being served by a totally mechanical life-support system, and the brain was in some way working with a computer so that the two could complement each other." MCQUARRIE

Luke's surgeon is not a human being, but a tin man, a droid. You say to yourself, 'Well, it's not a bad idea to have a surgeon be a piece of machinery. He has no feelings, he can't make a slip; he's perfectly attuned, reactive, and diagnostically sound because he's rigged up to the biggest computer they have.'" IRVIN KERSHNER, DIRECTOR

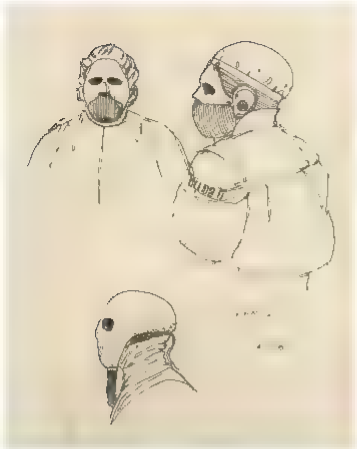




4 Concept sketch, Tatooine tank, April 6, 1978

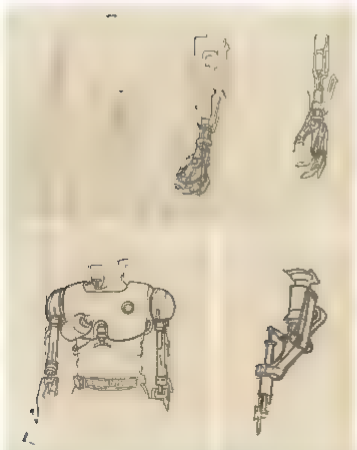
5 Concept sketches, medical droid, April 6, 1978

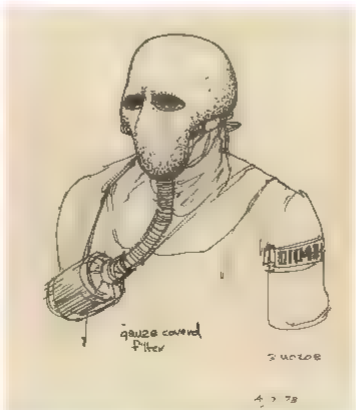
6 Concept sketches, medical droid



"I made some sketches showing Luke suspended and George liked that. I did some sketches on the medical robot. I had thought there would be a human being inside the medical robot on the set. We even thought of an amputee perhaps, but it turned out that they didn't need anyone inside: they just operated it with some sticks and wires.

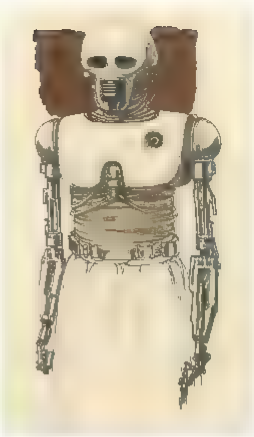
"George feels like these paintings are a take-off point: that somebody else is going to pick it up, develop it—and that if we get the right atmosphere going here, that the lighting and general feeling of it is quite good, then we'll move on to the next thing. We could perfect this and go into it deeper, but we just don't have all that much time." **McQUARRIE**

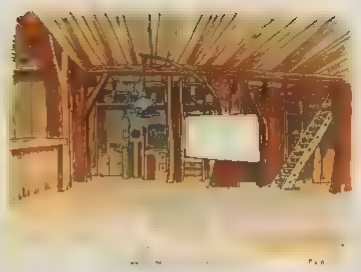


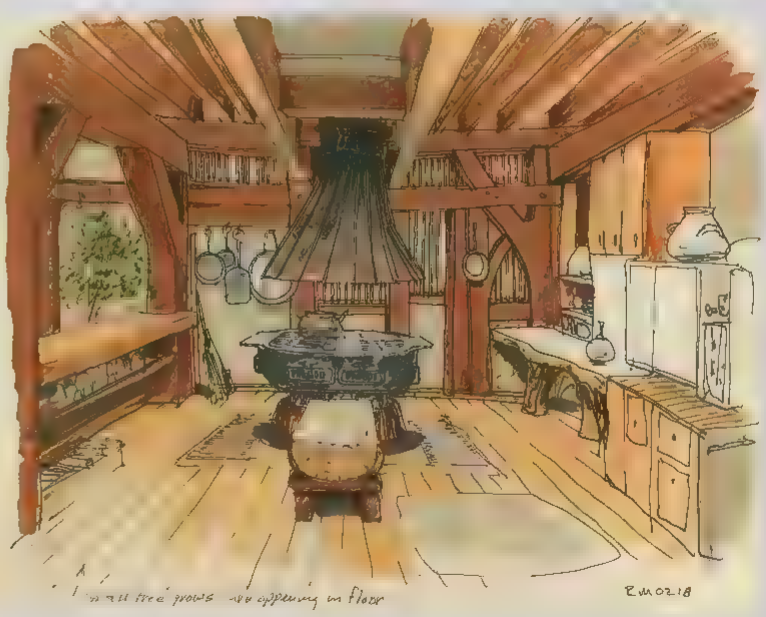


1. **Concept sketches, medical droid, April 6, 1978**
   The first version of the medical droid was less droid-like and more [illegible] robot.
2. **Concept sketch, Bacta tank with medical droid, April 6, 1978**
3. **Concept sketch, medical droid**
4. **Concept sketches, medical droid limbs**
5. **Concept sketch, medical droid, April 7, 1978**
6. **Drawing for production illustration, Bacta tank**
   This drawing shows a composite of different medical droid parts for final planning with a more human look.
7. **Concept sketch, medical droid**
8. **Production illustration, Bacta tank, April 19-20, 1978**

NOTE The Empire Strikes Back *pre-production concepts* *continue on page 394*






small tree grows up opening in floor
RM 0218

THE STAR WARS HOLIDAY SPECIAL

THE INFAMOUS *STAR WARS HOLIDAY SPECIAL* owes its origins to George Lucas's interest in seeing Chewbacca's home planet and a civilization of Wookiees. Prior to any written treatment or screenplay, Lucas toyed with the idea of including the Wookiee planet in *The Empire Strikes Back*, and he asked McQuarrie to produce some concept sketches. "We worked quite a lot on the Wookiee planet that was to be the home of Chewbacca, which was very interesting to me," McQuarrie said. "We created this giant forest and accessories, the transportation and the look of the surface of a planet where the Imperials have their base. This won't be in this particular picture, but they used some of the ideas I guess to base this television special on. They did a set, the home of the Wookiees."

McQuarrie gave a lot of thought to the Wookiee planet and explored it in several thumbnail sketches. "George said it could be miles high, this forest," he recalled. "I surmised that the topmost branches of these ancient trees, the branches at the top, would get lumped together so closely that you could walk on the top of the trees."

When Lucas decided to forgo the inclusion of the Wookiee planet in the second *Star Wars* installment, the idea was handed down for the *Holiday Special*. The special, which was produced by veteran variety show producers Smith-Hemion Productions, developed around the Wookiee planet concept. McQuarrie then completed additional illustrations specifically for the special, as did visual effects art director Joe Johnston. "I furnished our staff to the company that was doing the *Holiday Special*," recalls producer Gary Kurtz. "George and I were busy on other things, so we kind of left the production company to it. It was a terrible mistake. It was a really awful idea, but they just went on and did their thing. None of us was involved in any kind of day-to-day basis. We had no influence over the special other than saying it should be a Wookiee setting, and we provided the actors and some of the staff. Other than that, they just did what they wanted."

Smith-Hemion Productions brought in director David Acomba, who was known to Lucas, for the special. "Smith-Hemion had done some top-notch stuff, and they were noted for quality productions," says Acomba. "They wanted someone new and different to direct it, and I had gone to school for a period of time with George Lucas. George was so busy trying to get the sequel underway as this was happening. He was involved with meetings on the special and involved with the basic idea and approach to it, but it was up to us to pull that vision together. In television the producer really ran the show, and the executive producers hired other producers who were all TV people. The television machine took over and ground on."

As the storyline for the *Holiday Special* developed, it went deeper down the rabbit hole. As the producers tried to inject variety-hour sketch comedy acts, Acomba felt the train derailing. What initially attracted him to the project was slipping away. "Ralph McQuarrie's drawings were all inspired by George's view of where Wookiees would live and what their lives were about, and it was really exciting tapping into all that," recalls Acomba. "Ralph would come in with drawings, and of course they would be so terrific. The whole world of Wookiees was so interesting, and the environment was so spectacular."

While Acomba began the shoot as director, he quickly realized the program was no longer in line with the vision he and Lucas had initially laid out for it. "I had to leave because I thought, 'This is not at all the quality or the feeling that the film had,'" says Acomba. "I never saw it. I shot some stuff, but we never got into the Wookiees. I said, 'This is not working out.'"

While McQuarrie greatly enjoyed working on the Wookiee planet, he too, never saw the *Holiday Special*. "Frankly, I didn't see the Wookiee special! I was out of the country when that was on," he said.

Thumbnail sketches, Wookiee home and concept sketches, Wookiee home interior. *At this point, McQuarrie was working on Wookiee home design for the Holiday Special alongside ice planet concepts for Empire, and the same reference numbers were reused to multiple drawings.*

Concept sketch, Chewbacca in Wookiee home

Concept sketch, Wookiee home interior

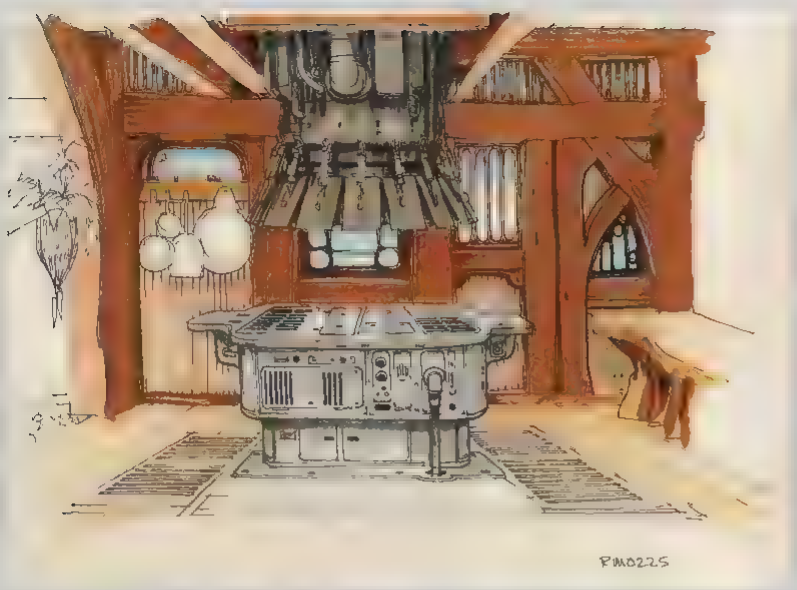
Concept sketches, Wookiee entertainment headset

Concept sketch, Wookiee home interior

Concept sketch, Wookiee mother

Concept sketch, elderly Wookiee

Concept sketch, Lumpy (Chewbacca's son) wearing entertainment headset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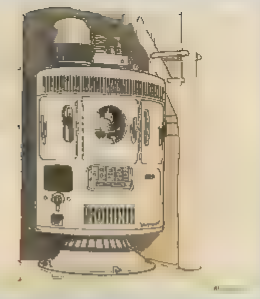
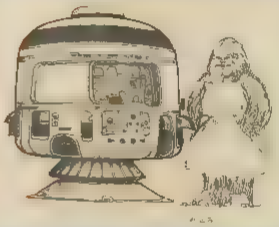
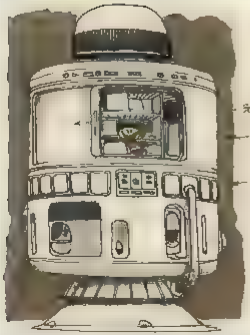
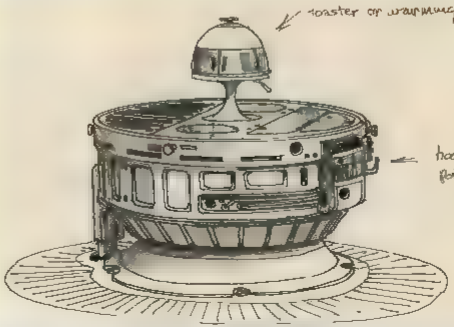
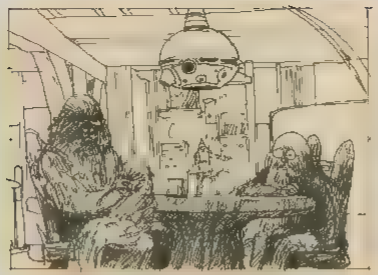
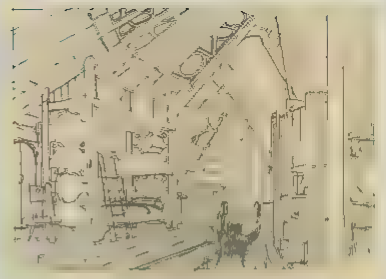





360° Revolving trays
(+transparent
sliding door
control panel
+ various dispensers
PM1250


toaster or warming oven
hooks in places for
pot holders & towels.
PM0228

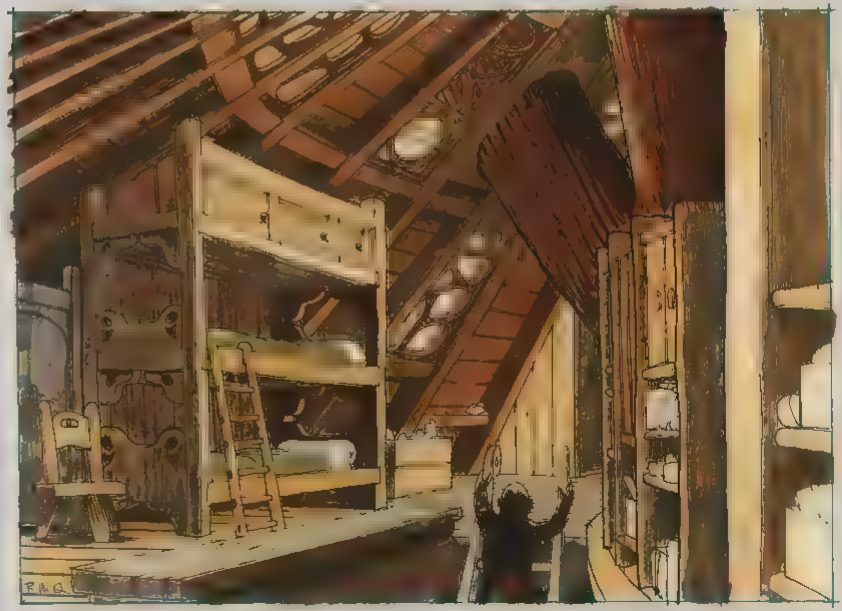




George said he'd like me to work on Wookiee material for a television show. I think I'd got some bare notes so I started making drawings of what I thought a Wookiee house would be like. I had a lot of fun doing that." MCQUARRIE

"I did some work on the holiday special, mainly the same kind of thing Ralph was working on. Wookiee tree house designs and interiors. I remember Ralph and I trading some sketches, but we were both working on Empire, on which I gave a much higher priority, and I got the sense that Ralph felt as well. My work on the special only spanned a couple of weeks." JOHNSTON

Ralph painted all of the frames of the cabinets in his home's kitchen. They were covered in beautiful decorative paintings of birds and flowers. It was so whimsical that I could use hang out there. It was so different from the Ralph we knew but it completed the picture of Ralph." RODIS-JAMERO



Concept sketch Wookiee home interior

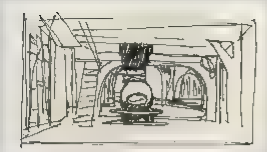
Concept sketches Wookiee appliances

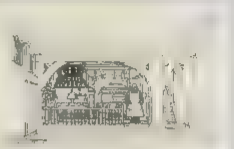
6 Thumbnail sketch Wookiees at dining room table

7 Drawing of production illustration Wookiee bunk beds

[illegible]

8 Concept sketch Wookiee bunk beds





"I did the interior of the house that this Wookiee family occupied with a fireplace and a living room. You could see into the kitchen, and the Wookiee mother was there and the little Wookiee child was sitting there looking at a hologram on this coffee table–like thing. It was all made out of wood and kind of rustic. That living room scene [10] was one of my favorite paintings I did for the *Star Wars* series." **McQUARRIE**

"These illustrations came from Ralph and his talks with George. What I thought was important was the circular aspect of where these Wookiees lived. I wanted to do a lot of 360-degree stuff, which was very unusual for television because it was so flat. That all came from Ralph's drawings. Their main house in the tree looks so fantastic, and if you look at the insides of the different rooms you see it's all done using circles as a design element." **DAVID ACOMBA** ORIGINAL DIRECTOR (UNCREDITED), *THE STAR WARS HOLIDAY SPECIAL*

1 **Thumbnail sketch,** Wookiee home interior

2 **Concept sketch,** Wookiee home interior

Drawing for production illustration, Wookiee home interior
McQuarrie's sketch (2) and (3) of the scene he drew during his

4 **Thumbnail sketch,** Wookiee home interior

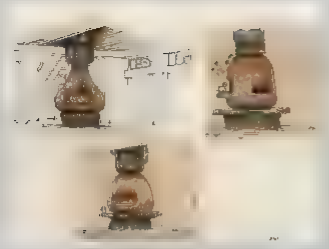
5 6 **Concept sketches,** Wookiee living room

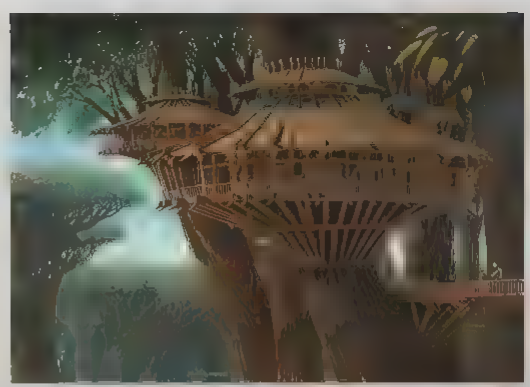
7 **Concept sketches,** Wookiee stove

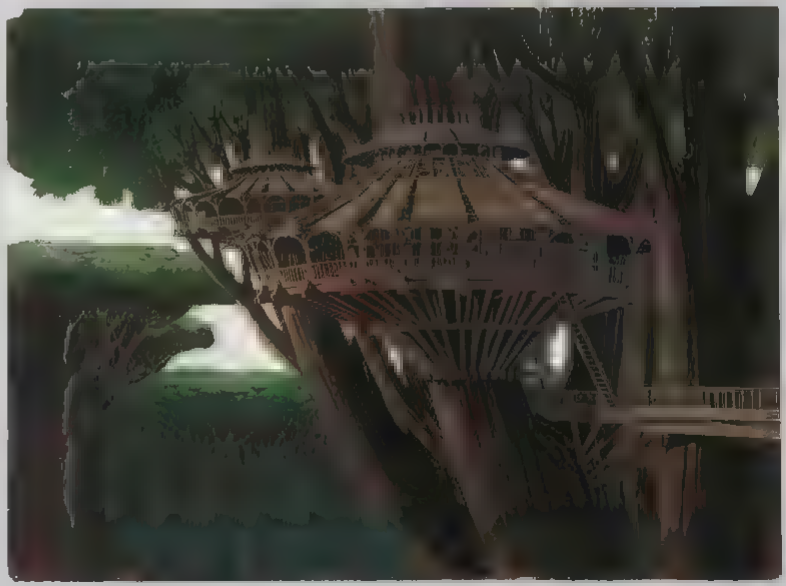
8 **Concept sketch,** Wookiee living room

9 **Drawing for production illustration,** Wookiee living room

10 **Production illustration,** Wookiee living room
The light fixture hanging from the ceiling bears a striking resemblance to a design McQuarrie did several years later for the spaceship in Steven Spielberg's E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial *(1982).*







" had d scussions with them on the light and what has was
a about You're basically operating under a canopy and
what happens under a canopy is - all turns green, but when
you look at the shots it's brown So that's not quite correct
But you wouldn't want everything to look green We had
those kinds of discussions" ACOMBA

Matte painting, Point of view om Wookiee
home in trees

Concept sketches the debris fall rom Wookiee roof

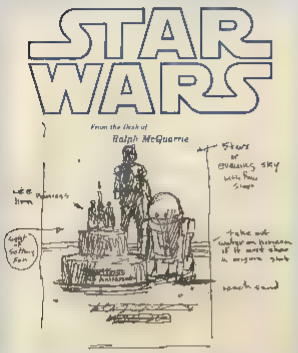
Drawing for production illustration version
Wookiee home exterior

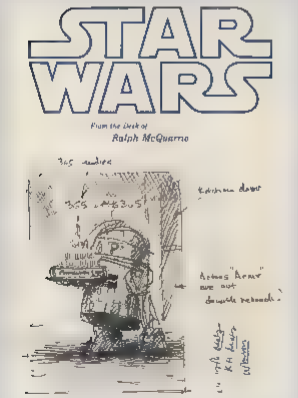
Drawing for production illustration version 2
Wookiee home exterior

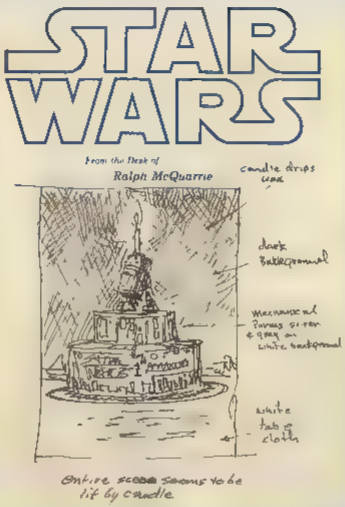
Production illustration, Wookiee home exterior

Matte painting, Wookiee home

STAR WARS BIRTHDAY POSTER






STAR WARS
From the Desk of
Ralph McQuarrie
candle drops wax
dark Battlegrounds
Mechanical Turns slowly & stay on entire background
white tab of cloth
Entire scene seems to be lit by candle.

Concept sketches, *Star Wars* birthday poster, May 1978

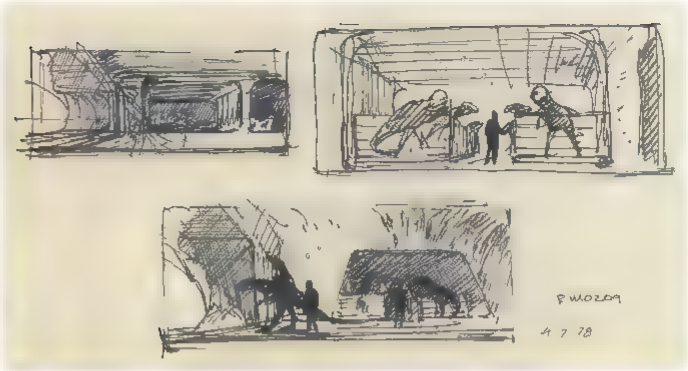
McQuarrie did several concepts for the poster celebrating the one year anniversary of the release of *Star Wars*, but ultimately the poster went in an alternate direction and utilized a photograph rather than an illustration. The poster was photographed by Weldon Anderson from a design by Tony Seiniger.

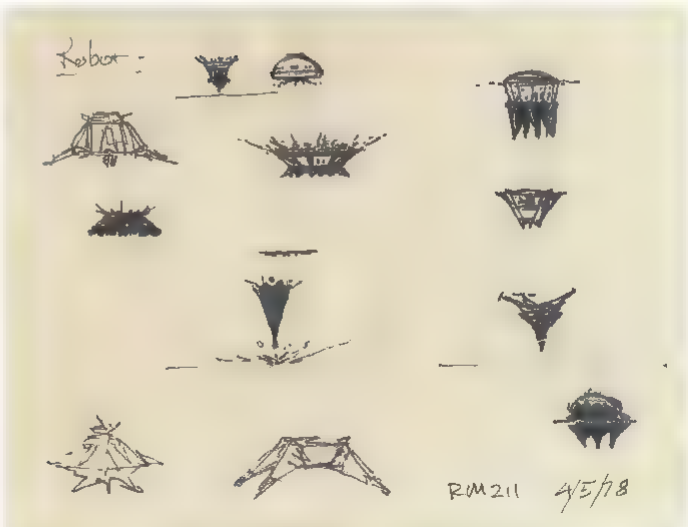
Concept sketches, *Star Wars* birthday poster, May 1978

NOTE The Empire Strikes Back *pre-production concepts continue from page 281*

"The probot was developed because George said he wanted a machine—a robot—designed for the purpose of exploring on and under the very surface of a planet to seek out enemy activity. The idea is a very good one, because such a machine can often go where soldiers can't—such as into a place with a poisonous atmosphere." **MCQUARRIE**

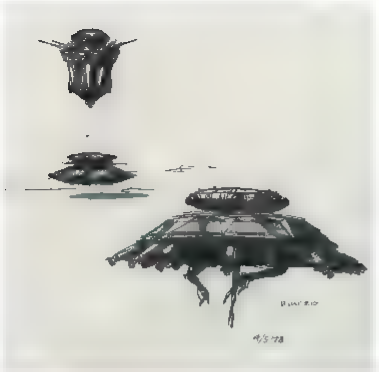
"Ancho Vista—a Lucas-owned property in San Anselmo used as offices for a time—was a four-bedroom house on three levels and was entirely devoted to the art department. Ralph had a drawing table there when he needed it, but I only remember one time that he actually sat down and sketched—while we were working on the probe droid. Ralph much preferred working at home, I think because his work required more support that didn't travel easily. He used a couple of different airbrushes with an air tank and a big selection of Cel-Vinyl colors in plastic bottles. Nilo Rodis-Jamero and I could get by with a few pads of paper, felt-tip pens, and a dozen markers." **JOHNSTON**





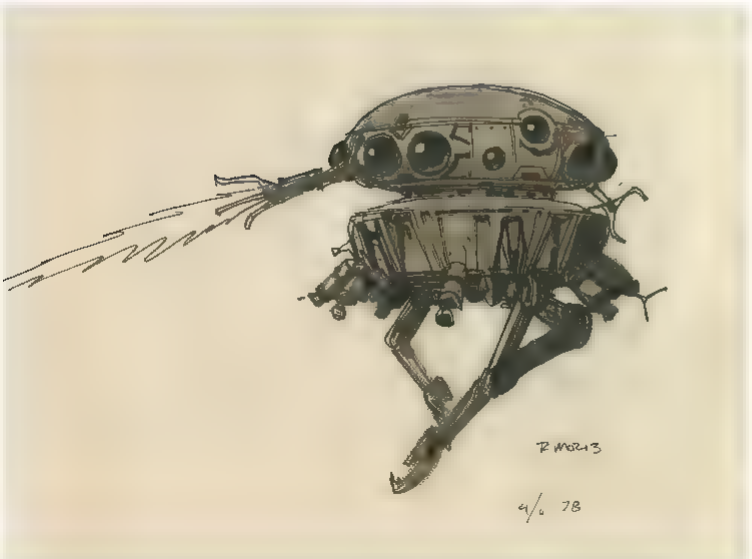
Thumbnail sketches, ice planet rebel hangar interior, April 7, 1978.

Concept sketches, probot, April 5, 1978.



The probots were Joe Johnston's concept, and I made paintings of them in the early stages. He came up with a number of robots that moved on the surface of the planet. I started with one that floats. The first three or four drawings kind of nailed it down, and I got on to this form right away. As I began sketching, I got into things like tendrils or arms hanging down from the body of the unit. Sometimes you just have a feeling for these things, and this one started to feel right. I envisioned the pod as floating along like some kind of anti-gravity unit. I thought it might touch down every once in a while and push itself along on its legs like an astronaut does on the moon.

"This was based on a shot from *National Geographic* magazine I owe that background totally to the photographer that went out and took his fair shooting this arctic landscape. I don't know whether that is the South Pole or the North Pole, but it's close to one of the poles, and it represents a field of ice. Now when the ice breaks up in the spring all these pieces are kind of floating around and when everything freezes again, it leaves all these chunks of ice kind of sticking up like this." MCQUARRIE



Concept sketches, probot, April 5-6, 1978

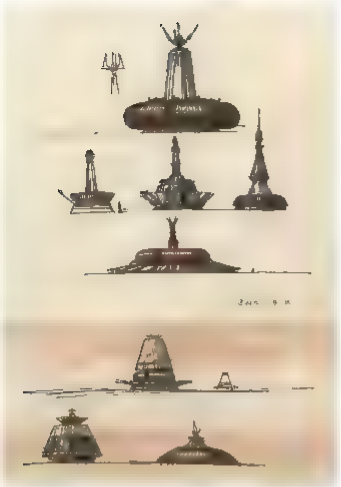
Thumbnail sketch for production illustration, probot on ice planet

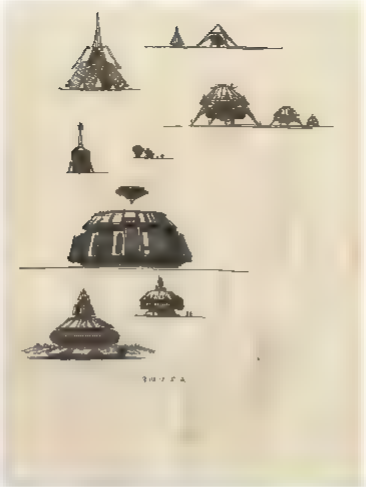
Drawing for production illustration, probot on ice planet

Production illustration, probot on ice planet

5

6





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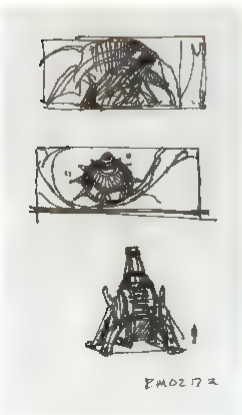


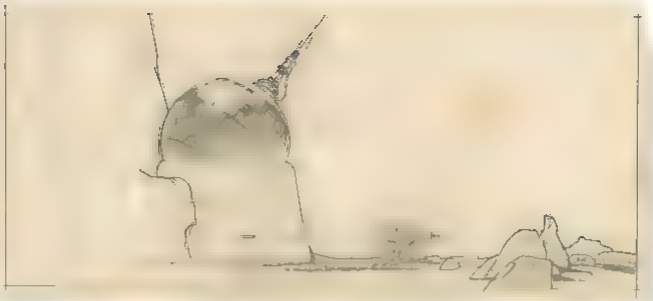
5

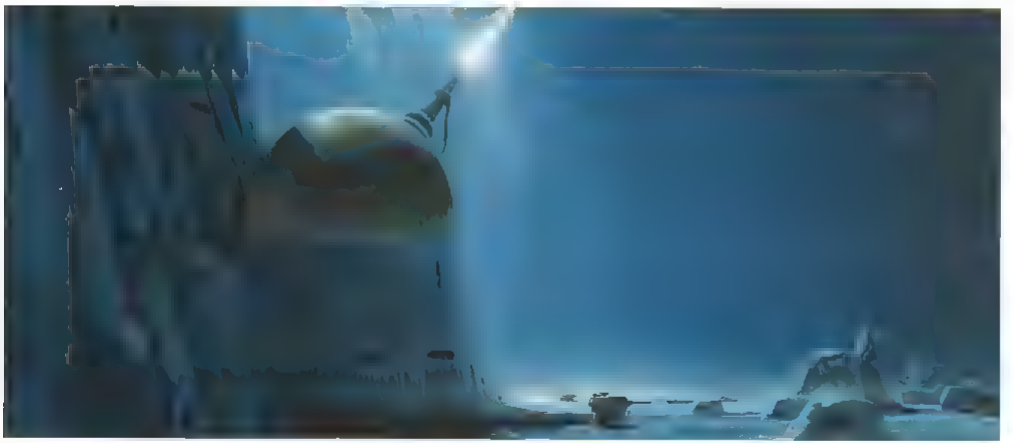
I went through a number of sketches on various forms of the ion cannon. Some of them were housed inside of a cave. Some were bridges across a canyon, which seemed like a way to mount something in ice." **MCQUARRIE**

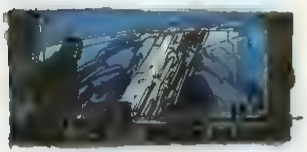
Concept sketches, ion cannon

3 Thumbnail sketches, ice planet shield generator

4 Concept and thumbnail sketches, ion cannon







There's something about a sphere which contains a great deal of energy [illegible]ssibly. There is also a [illegible]ntic dirt which is the control booth [illegible]n cave was left of [illegible]annon which I then did a paint[illegible]ng of [illegible]. I had an idea that maybe the guys would [illegible]ide the cannon and the full controls would be inside but I thought it would probably be more interesting to look through this window and see [illegible]he cannon outside moving." MEQUARRIE

"When you see Ralph's designs on this [illegible]ou sense a real world with credible technology and [illegible]onality. Even though you may be wondering, 'What does [illegible]e switch do?' you accept [illegible]overall as something that could really work. 'How would the fire control system of the ion cannon actually work?' A team focused around a display screen would allow you to select a target and then someone would tell you to fire. Ralph was always thinking about how [illegible]all worked." CRAIG BARRON, MATTE PAINTER/PHOTOGRAPHY, A. SYLFAN

a–d Thumbnail sketches, ice planet ion cannon

e Drawing for production illustration, "Big gun"

f Production illustration "Big gun," July 23, 1978

g Thumbnail sketches, ion cannon control booth

h Concept sketch, control booth operator

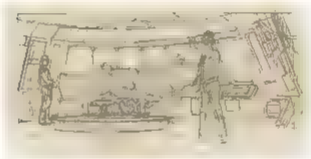
i–p Thumbnail sketches, ion cannon control booth

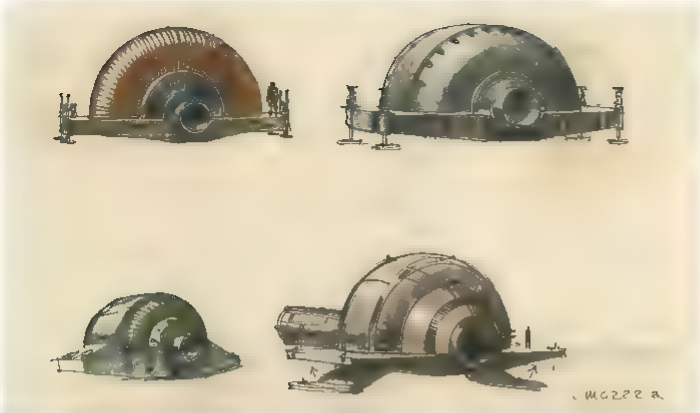
q Drawing for production illustration, version 1, "Rebel big gun control booth"

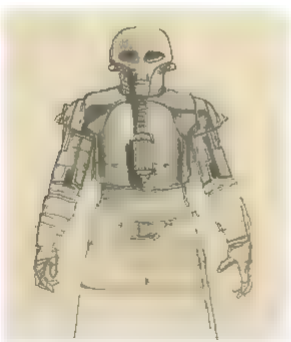
Drawing for production illustrator version 2, "Rebel big gun control booth"

r Production illustration "Rebel big gun control booth," July 26–27, 1978

s Detail from production illustration "Rebel big gun control booth," July 26–27, 1978







Concept sketches, ice planet shield generator

Concept sketch for production illustration, "Attack on generator"

Concept sketch, ice planet shield generator

Concept sketches, medical droid

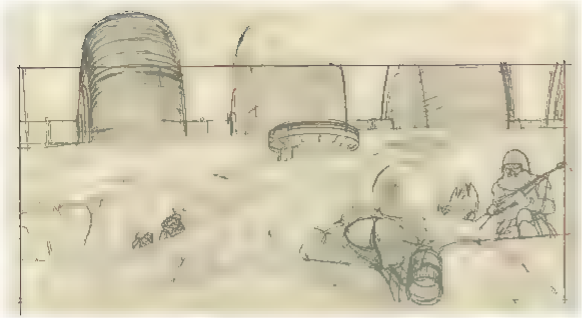
Concept sketch, ice planet shield generator

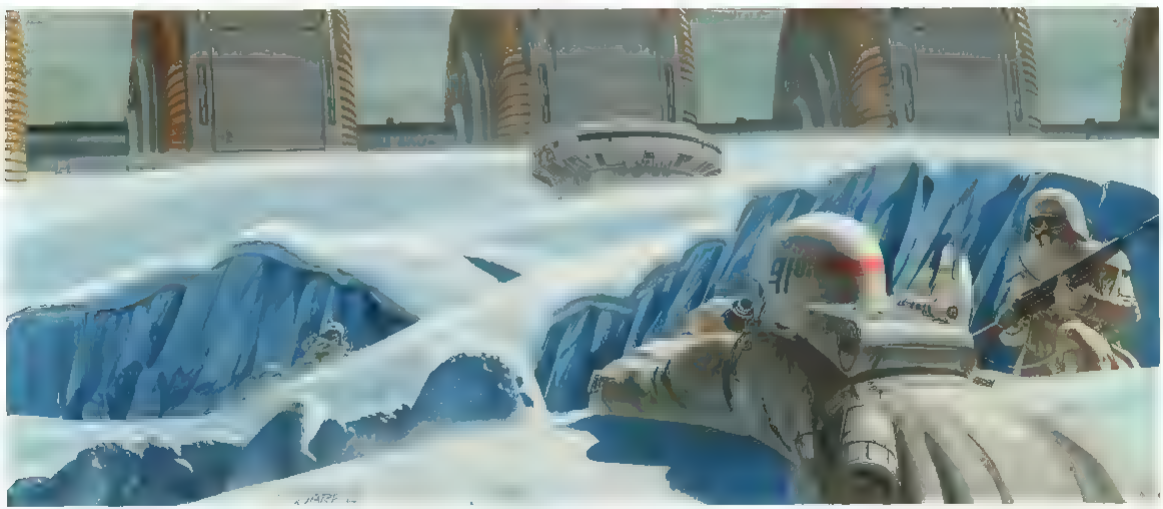
Drawings for production illustration, "Attack on generator"

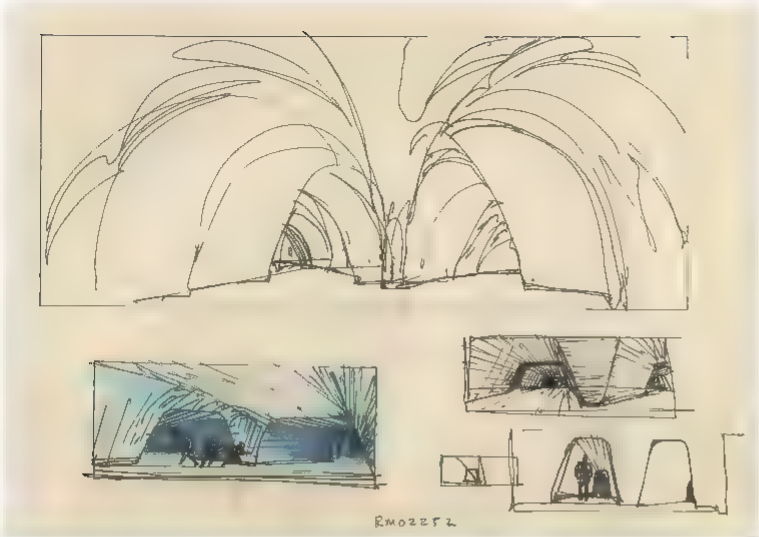
Production illustration, "Attack on generator," June 23–24 and 26, 1978

"George thought of the shield generator in terms of this row of giant disks like a coil. That was his concept basically. I thought the generator had to be a matte painting. I felt it might be more interesting if you were looking up a hill at it. That would put the generator on the ridgeline, which would make the matte line easier, and I put in a turret, [of] which I thought could be on the actual location.

"I think Joe Johnston and I both worked on the snowtrooper. It was my concept first. The snowtrooper has a mask over the face with a breathing thing that I assumed warmed the air as you breathed in. It had little heaters in there. This costume represented the average trooper, and Joe added the hood that covers the neck, which I thought was a nice addition. It made a better overall look." **McQUARRIE**



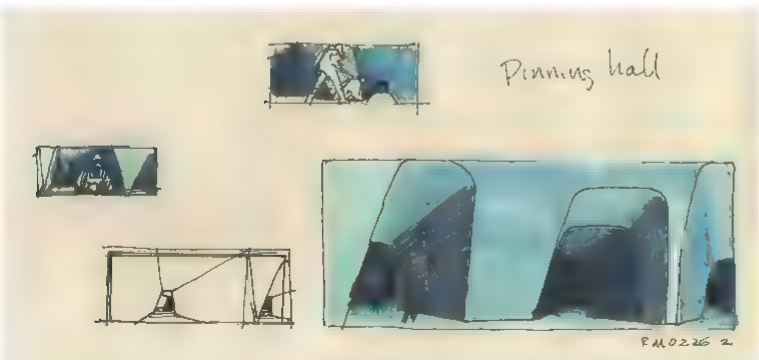




Wh[illegible] rebels are on planet Hoth, Ralph designed the caverns [illegible] look like they had all been dug out by some kind of giant [illegible]s. As we've shown and talked about in the movie. You don't really think about [illegible] but if you do want to think about [illegible] here for you. BARRON

At first [illegible] just had big round caves with a lot of stalactites hanging down as [illegible] they just simply came in and occupied an existing cave. Then I began to think that it seems more likely that these guys with the equipment lasers mainly would be able to just carve out a cave if they didn't have a big enough space in any one place to function in. McQUARRIE

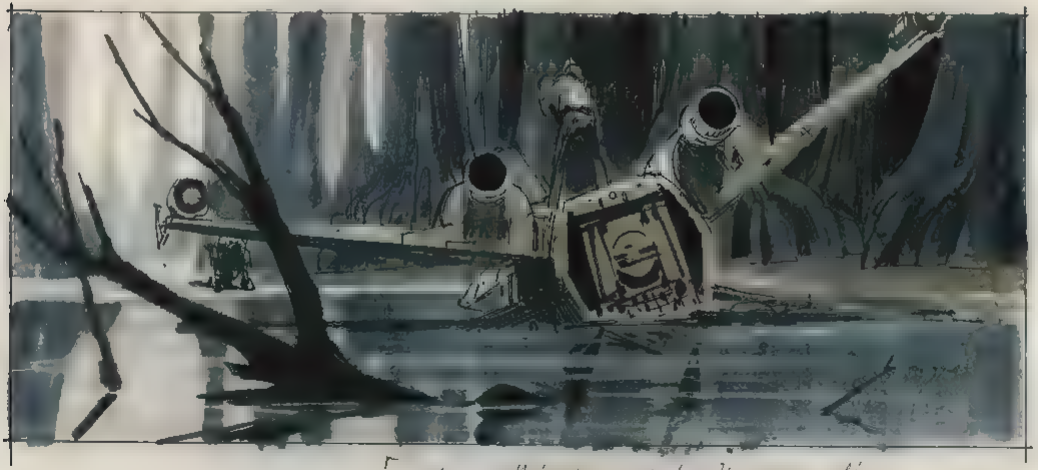
"I was a little disappointed in the production value that we got out of the hangar set because of the time it took to do what we did in there. More than half the material was probably ruined in so close that you didn't see the scope of the set. KURTZ



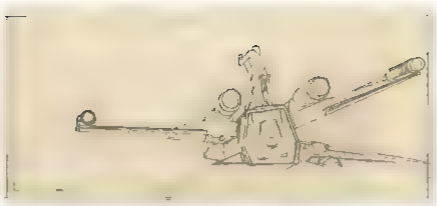
Thumbnail sketches, ice planet rebel base

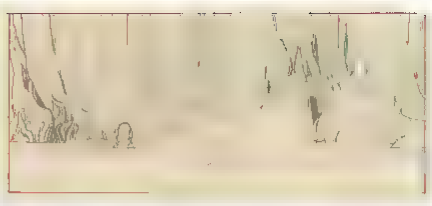
Concept sketches for production illustration, rebels in ice planet base

= Production illustration, rebels in ice planet base



This is all lighter in value than it would be RM0227a





4 OPPOSITE Thumbnail and concept sketches, X-wing on bog planes

4 Drawings for production illustration, "X-wing in Bog"
Although frequently disparate drawings for "X-wing" environment and background matte paintings are integrated

5 Production illustration, "X-wing in Bog," June 20–22 1978

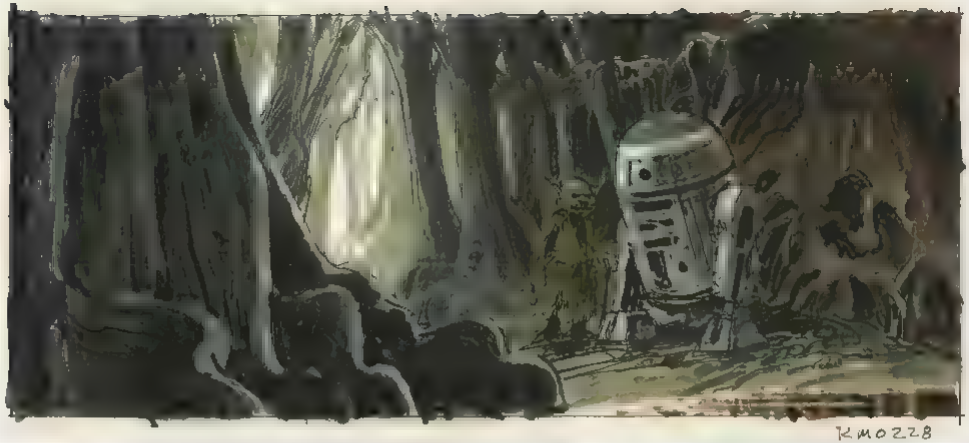
"This was the first one that I did of Dagobah, and it shows Luke on top of his X-wing. I made reference to actual swamp trees on Earth like in the Florida Everglades. These relatively thin members, which I conceive to be petrified or stone, would be supporting a great deal of weight, but I'm trying to make it believable by giving them just enough weight. I felt like they tended to look like big insect legs, and then I gave them a sort of musculature and yet they were sinuous and treelike too.

"The fog gives you a feeling of old movies from the 1930s, like ghost movies where Sherlock Holmes would be out on the moors. There would be this ground fog, a mist, a dark and gloomy, spooky place. Fog tends to give mystery and adds mood." McQUARRIE

▲ Concept sketches (from transparency), Yoda and Yoda's hut exterior

Thumbnail sketches, Yoda and R2-D2 on bog planet

◀ Thumbnail sketch, Luke, Yoda, and R2-D2 on bog planet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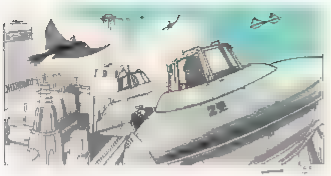
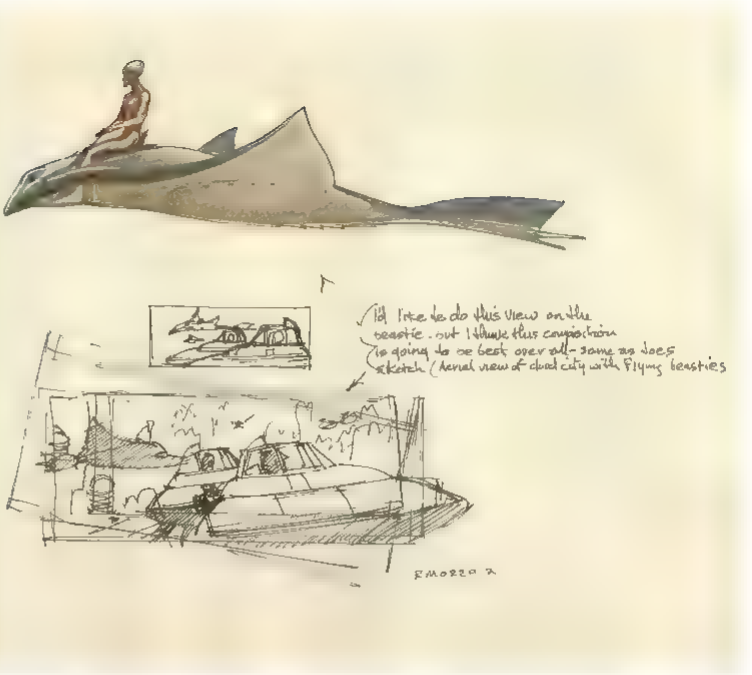




"The only thing that Ralph didn't do on Bespin was the cloud car. Joe did that, and Ralph incorporated that into his painting, and much to Ralph's credit he never changed Joe's designs." RODIS-JAMERO

"This painting [1] is based almost entirely on a sketch Joe Johnston did. I changed the buildings a little bit and I added all the clouds and lighting that Joe hadn't been able to get into the sketch.

"I did a little bit of work on the symbols on the car. I designed an alphabet for it, I did one which we were going to use on Vultar for *Star Trek*, and it looked quite good to me. I used similar letterforms but I didn't do a whole alphabet for this." MCQUARRIE

Concept sketch by Joe Johnston, cloud car on Cloud City

2 Concept sketches, June 8, 1978, Cloud City flying creature

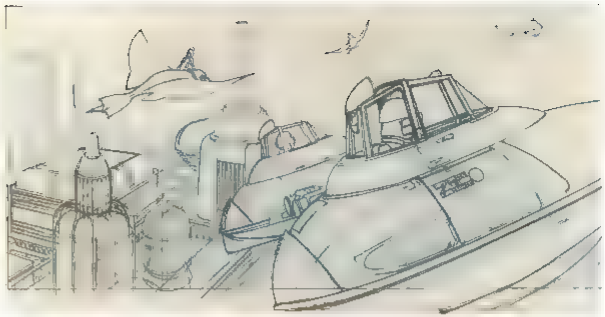
Preliminary illustration, "Cloud cars over Cloud City with flying beasties"

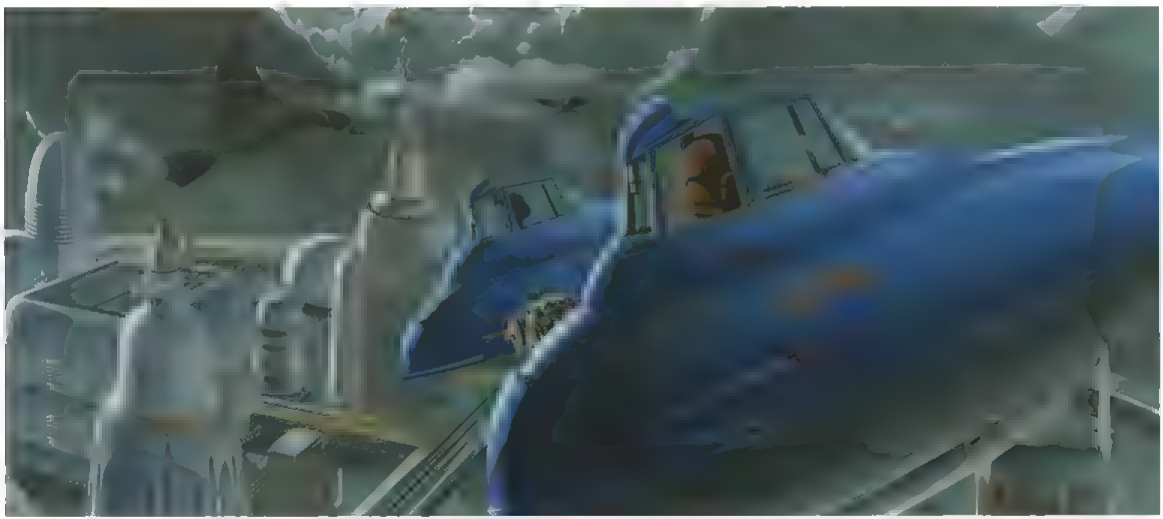
3 Thumbnail sketches for illustration, "Cloud cars over Cloud City with flying beasties" and concept sketch, Cloud City flying creature
While McQuarrie prefaced his own angle on the "beasie" (see page 237 [4]), he felt Johnston nailed

Drawing for production illustration, "Cloud cars over Cloud City with flying beasties"

6 Drawing for production illustration, "Cloud cars over Cloud City with flying beasties"
McQuarrie put down a grid to aid with flying out the perspective of the drawing.

7 Production illustration, "Cloud cars over Cloud City with flying beasties," June 22–25, 1978
The Millennium Falcon is visible on a landing pad below the tail of the leftmost flying creature.

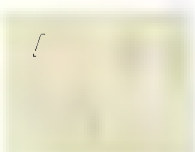


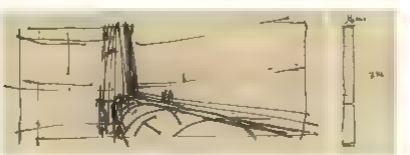


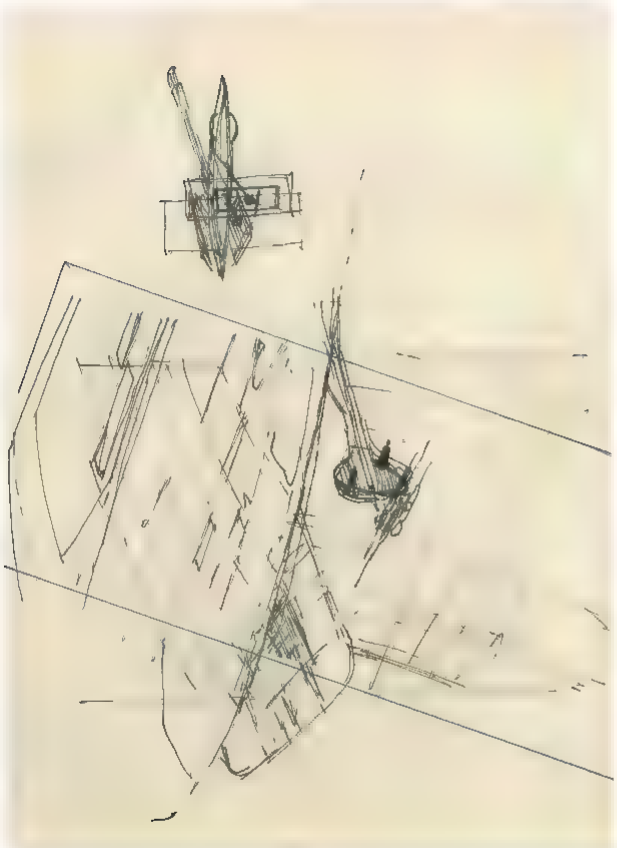
Thumbnail and concept sketches. Cloud City reactor shaft and vanes

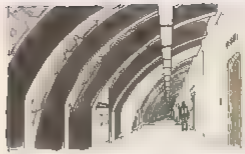
Concept sketch, Cloud City reactor vanes

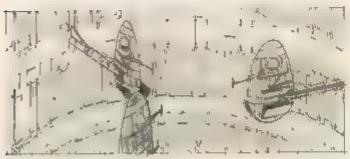
Thumbnail and concept sketches. Cloud City reactor shaft and vanes

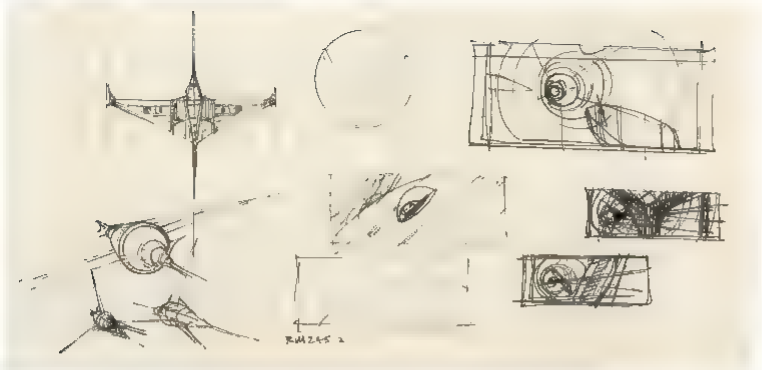


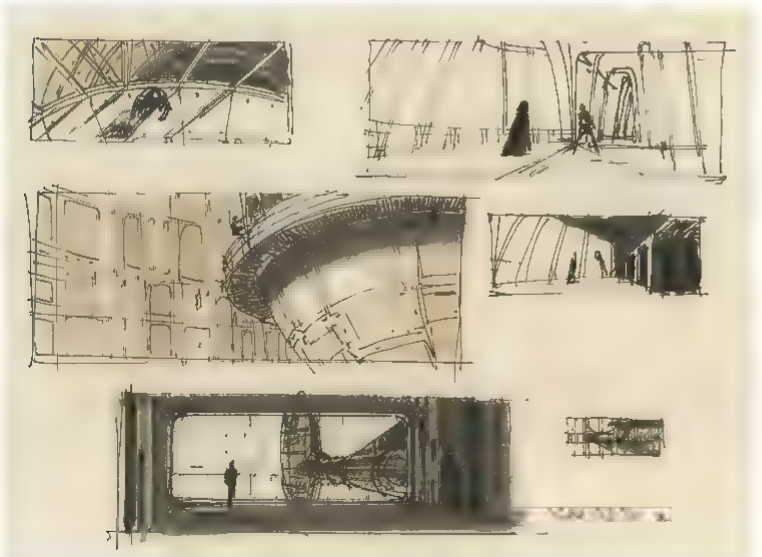










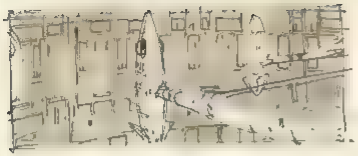


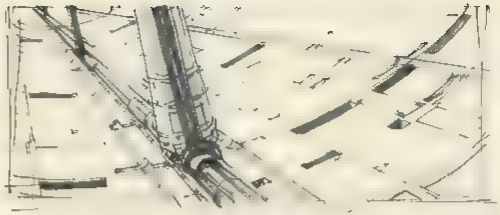
Sometimes I don't have very much of an idea to how something works. Sometimes just a shape will be interesting. As often as not I have a reason for it to be that way, for putting a certain feature on it, some reason for a detail on a vehicle. I will be some kind of access hatch or ventilator or vent door or something that works somehow, that I know about. It's not totally logical because I'm not a scientist but a bit in spite of that I'm feigning somewhat like a scientist who doesn't have any limitations. In other words I can just make up anything I want to." MCQUARRIE

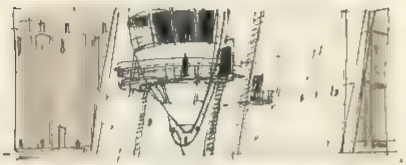
Thumbnail and concept sketches, Cloud City reactor shaft and vanes

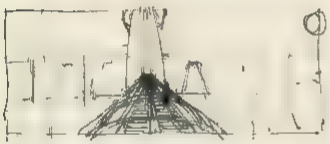
Thumbnail sketches, Cloud City reactor shaft and vanes

An overall concept sketch of Cloud City, with other perspective studies from illustrations. (See page 145.)









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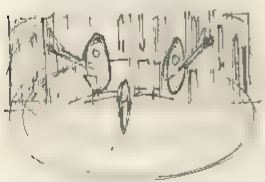
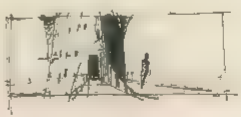
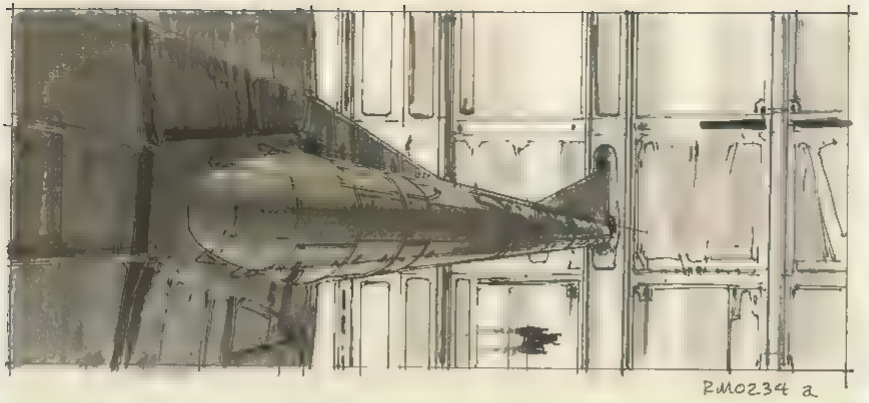
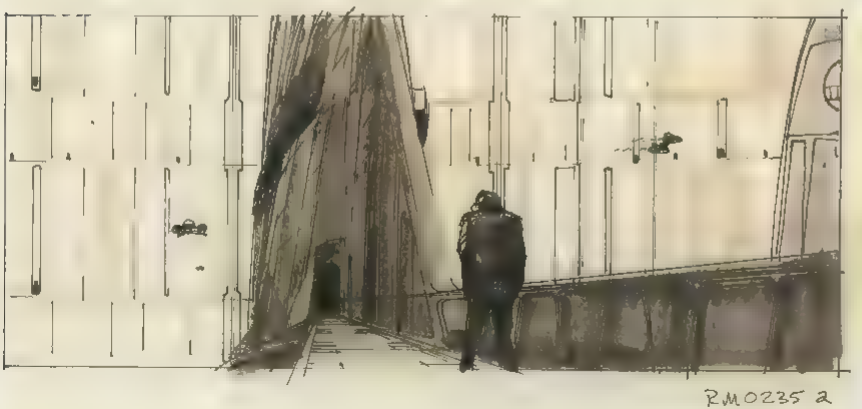
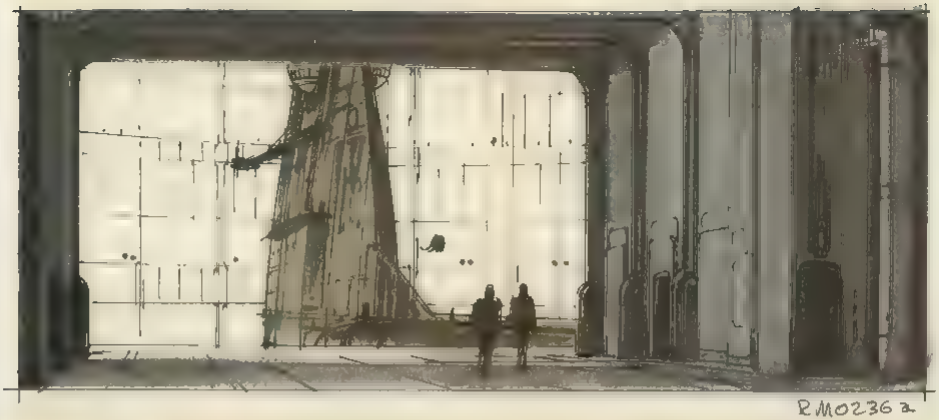


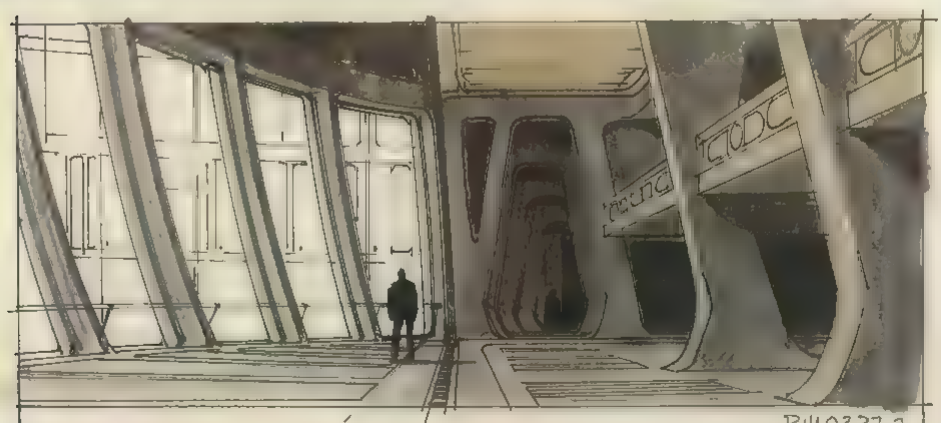






A Concept sketches, Cloud City reactor shaft and vanes

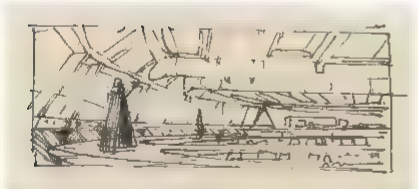

RM0236 2


RM0237 2

"The nature of the bridge was something that was up in the air, and I decided why not have windows instead of just one of those blind bridges that so many spaceships have. I figured this could be a blue screen, and you could see planets going by and you could see the *Millennium Falcon* go roaring overhead. Plus, Vader can stride around this runway looking dramatic while he confers with his officers in the various action that takes place.

"I thought the bridge crew might wear similar uniforms to the ones they wore in the Death Star, because they were the same kind of people. I thought maybe the people that operate these units in this particular part of the ship might wear helmets and they might be peering at things that would irritate their eyes if they didn't wear glasses." MCQUARRIE

4



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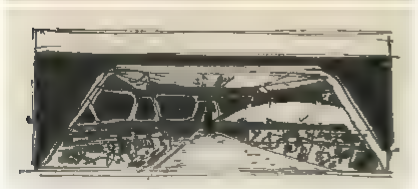


3

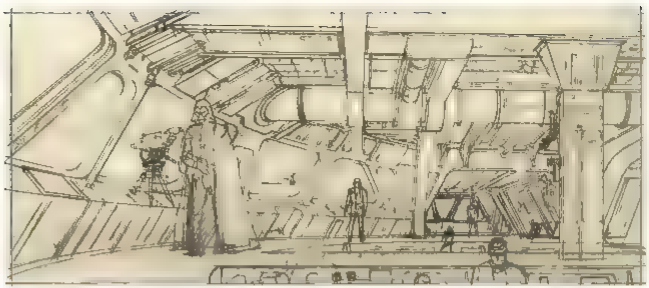
5

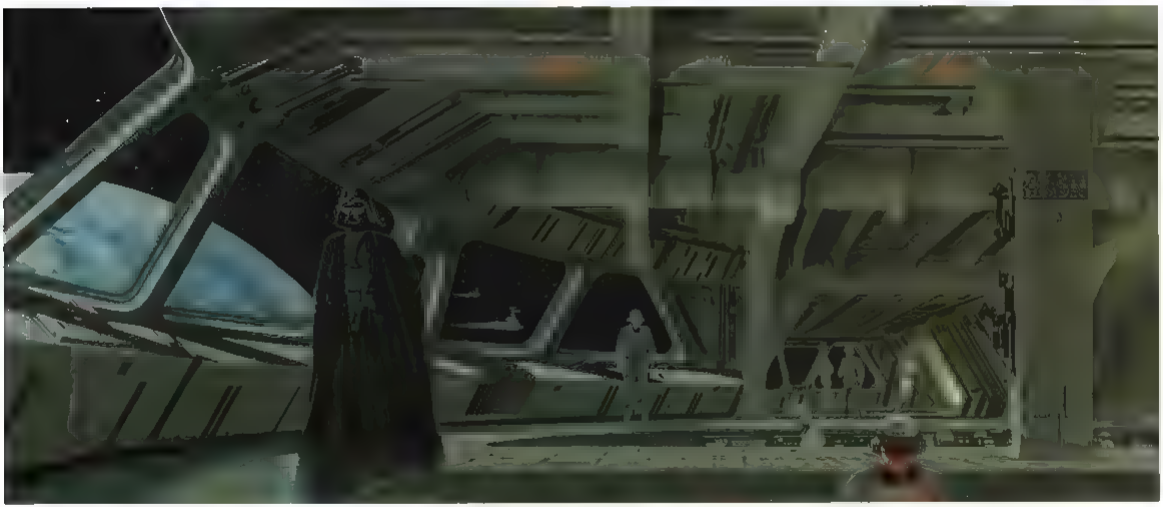
3 Thumbnail and concept sketches, Vader's Star Destroyer bridge

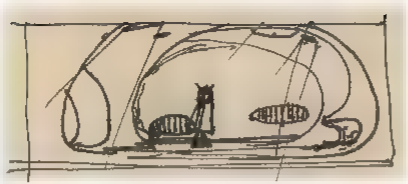
4 Drawings for production illustration, "Star Destroyer bridge (looking at right-hand inboard side)"
These six ways, on two separate pieces of vellum, are presented positioned as they were combined in the illustration found.

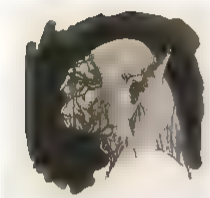
5 Drawing for production illustration, "Star Destroyer bridge (looking at right-hand inboard side)"

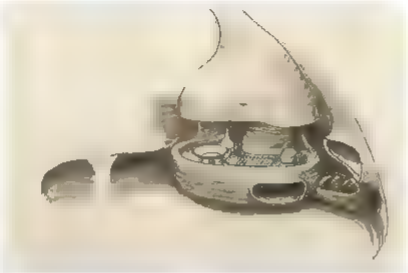
6 Production illustration, "Star Destroyer bridge (looking at right-hand inboard side)," July 18–20, 1978

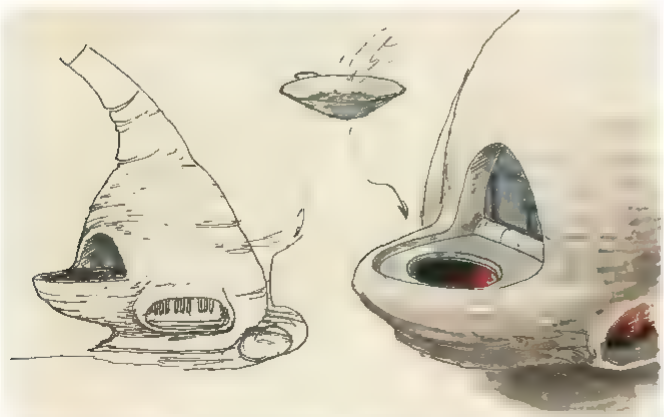


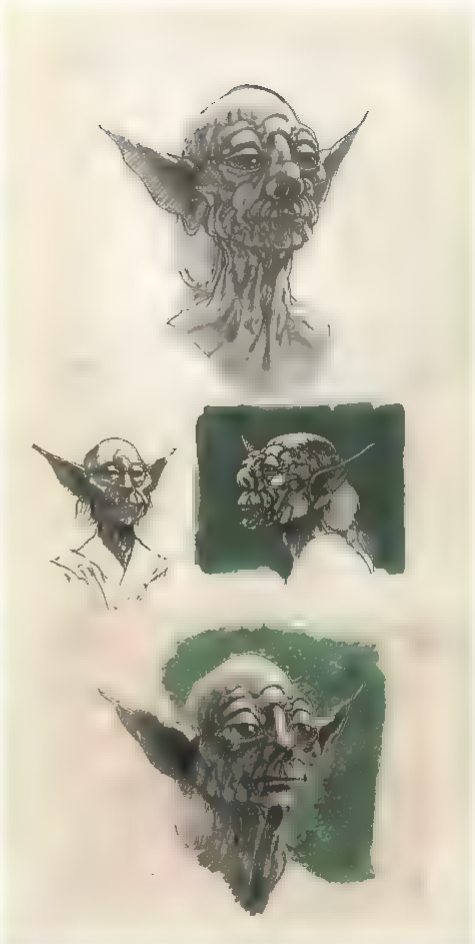












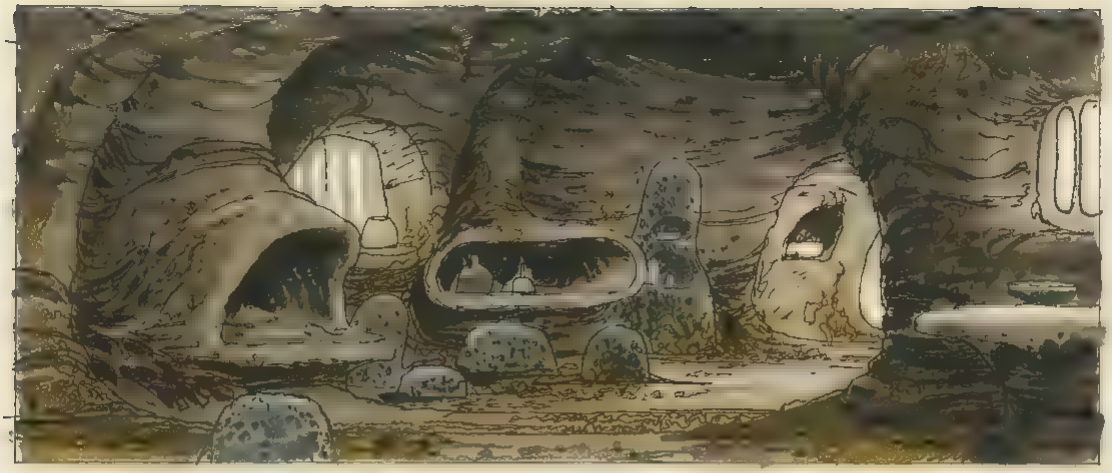
"We need a name for the critter. Let's make him small, about 18 inches high. Maybe he's slightly froglike. Slick skin, wide mouth, no nose, bulbous eyes that move around. It should be like Kermit the Frog, but an alien, with very thin puppet arms and little thin hands. Maybe a bulbous body with short legs, but very large, floppy webbed feet, almost like swim fins. It would have the personality of a Muppet, only it would be realistic enough to be believable." LUCAS

"We worked for about four months before coming up with a design we liked. You can see the progression from Joe's drawings to Ralph's paintings, see the character's look improving, acquiring more personality." LUCAS

"This is my version of Joe's Yoda sketch. I felt that Yoda needed a little more character. He was supposed to be a real sage and a real important person, and if he was just cute, he would look more like a Muppet and you couldn't take him seriously. So I thought maybe if we gave him a bridge to his nose and a little more cheekbones then he would be more convincing. I gave him a slightly different look. I'd hoped to see him have more of an ascetic look, so my sketches gave him that. But it kind of drifted back toward what Joe originally intended. The sketches are my statement, and if they don't use them, I can't help that. It's what George liked the best.

"Stuart Freeborn gave Yoda this kind of pursed mouth, which he didn't have in any of the sketches that I can recall seeing. His eyelids had three folds in them, and he had just the right look I thought. And Stuart really did him far better than my ideas." MCQUARRIE

1 Concept sketch, Yoda
2 Thumbnail sketch, Yoda's hut interior
3 Concept sketch, Yoda
4 5 Concept sketches, Yoda's hut interior
6 7 Concept sketches, Yoda



"Yoda was going to be old. He was intended to look extremely old, just covered with a fine network of wrinkles. His whole being was wrinkled, with any weathered relic hands and odd bits used for trapping in mud. This piece shows part of the toadstools dragged in for cha ra A (one ohanes is one of the most advanced things that he has. Yoda doesn't have very many advanced things. His mind is the advanced thing." MCQUARRIE

Concept sketches, Yoda's hut interior

Concept sketch for production illustration, Luke in Yoda's hut

Drawing for production illustration, Luke in Yoda's hut

Production illustration, Luke in Yoda's hut

"Because costume in the environment was [illegible] McQuarrie pored over Ebbets Stadium [illegible] on a Yoda design."

3

RM. 5245

"Banyan trees look a little bit otherworldly, and I thought they would look more otherworldly if they were really big, much bigger than the standard banyan tree on Earth. Then I thought: They're not different enough. So I started thinking, in terms of what we see here, in the second picture with Yoda's house, envisioning those things as like a petrified tree, and the earth has washed out from around it, and we are looking at the roots of a dead tree which are now exposed. I don't really completely think of it that way, but we got really fantastic trees.

"Yoda's house is like a beehive. This was in response to George's requirement that he have a rounded dome, like little gnome houses that had stacks of little chimneys coming out. I made a sketch of it and he looked at it and said, 'That's just the way I like it,' that's just what I was talking about. So we kind of stayed with that throughout. The guys in England have made a number of models, using this as a basis more or less. There were other ideas brought forward on that, but this was George's original concept, and this is the one he likes the best.

"Yoda is a real master of the dance, but he's not concerned with any mechanical methods of doing things. It's really back to nature, and he uses those little sticks and mud and transparent little bits of stone to make a kind of glass effect. But actually it's sticks and stone and mud." MCQUARRIE

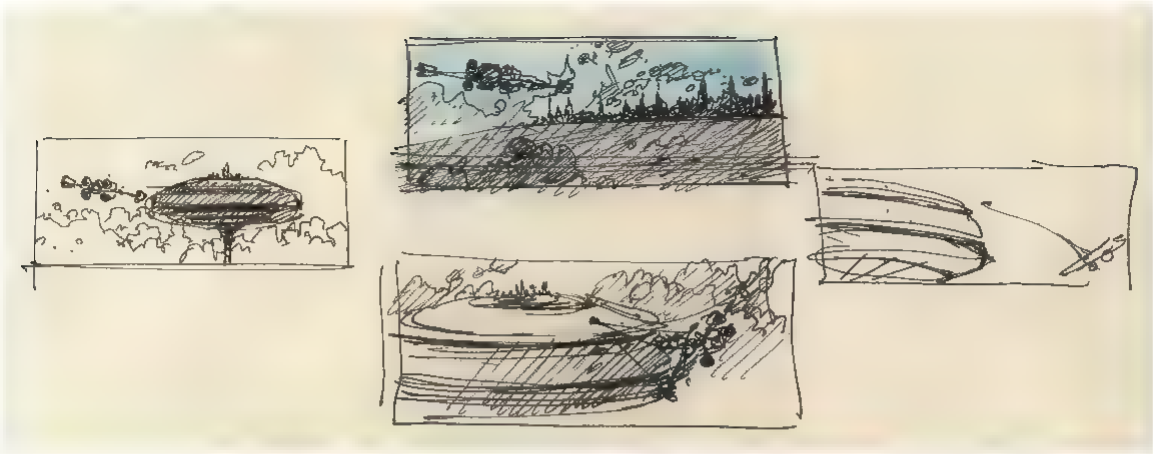
a, c Concept sketches, Yoda's hut exterior
A "real" Banyan tree does not appear to be one of Mr. McQuarrie's primary concerns in this design.

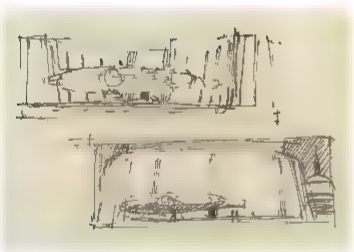
b Thumbnail sketches, Yoda's hut exterior

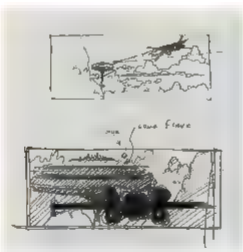
Concept sketch for production illustration, *"Munch house (exterior)*

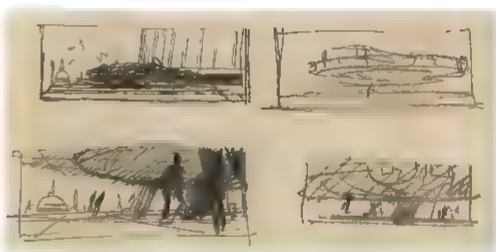
d Production illustration "Munch house (exterior)," July 5 and 27, 1978

e Detail from production illustration, "Munch house (exterior), July 25 and 27, 1978









"This is shows the light of the setting sun as it fades up through the atmosphere and through the haze which gives you a reddish glow and on up into violet. Some nights if it's very hazy or smoggy like in Los Angeles the sky will be pretty orange, but if it's one of those really clear nights you see this change of color. I like that type of sky. I put things I like into my paintings." MCQUARRIE

Thumbnail sketches, X-wing arriving at Cloud City

Thumbnail sketches, the *Millennium Falcon* on landing pad

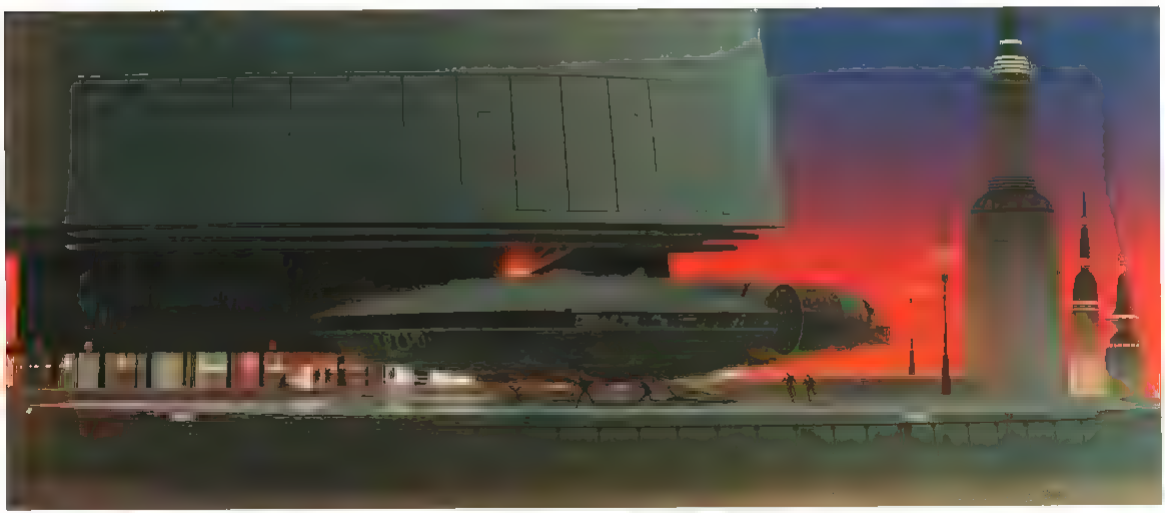
Thumbnail sketches, X-wing arriving at Cloud City

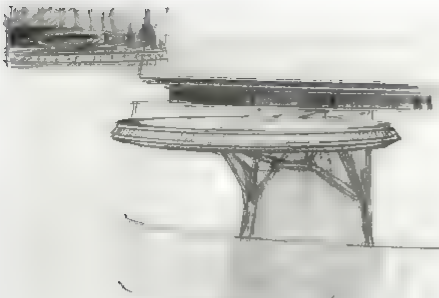
4 Thumbnail sketches, the *Millennium Falcon* on landing pad

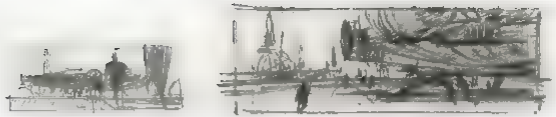
5 Thumbnail sketch for production illustration, "Dusk battle on Cloud City"

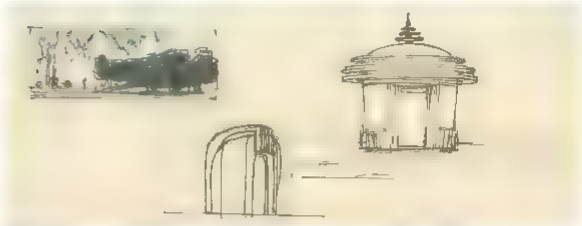
6–7 Concept sketches for production illustration, "Dusk battle on Cloud City"

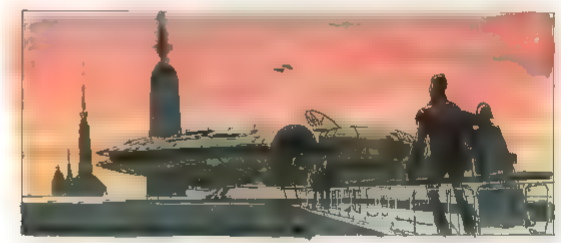
8 Production illustration, "Dusk battle on Cloud City," July 24–25, 1978











"How much time I take to complete a painting varies greatly, depending on the complexity of its elements. Some of the paintings I've done for *The Empire Strikes Back* have taken as long as seven days to complete. Others, I've finished in a day. The average is two or three days.

"My favorite painting [for *Empire*]? I suppose the one that shows the arrival of Han Solo in Cloud City at twilight, with the *Millennium Falcon* in the center of that big ramp area." MCQUARRIE

2 Concept sketches, the *Millennium Falcon* on landing pad

Thumbnail sketch, the *Millennium Falcon* on landing pad and concept sketches, Cloud City architecture

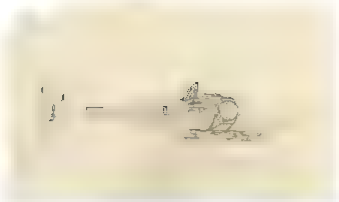
4 Concept sketch, the *Millennium Falcon* on landing pad

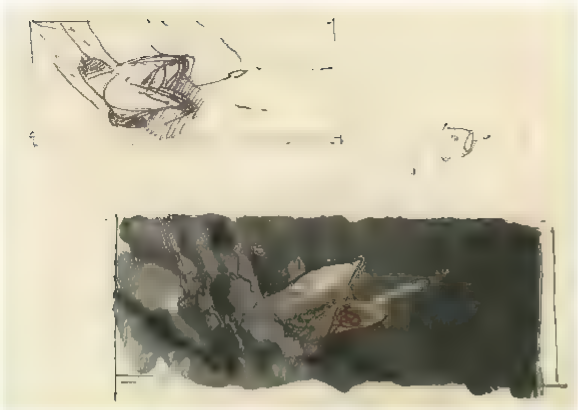
5 Concept sketch for production illustration, "Dawn greeting"

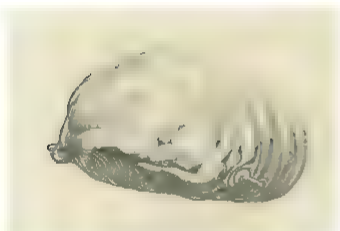
6–8 Drawings for production illustration "Dawn greeting"

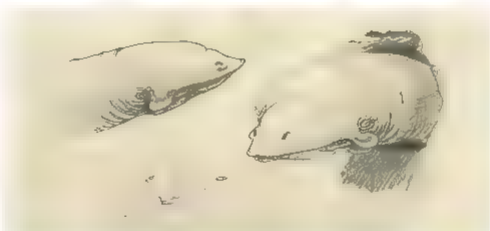
Production illustration, "Dawn greeting," July 31–August 1, 1978

FOLLOWING SPREAD Detail from production illustration, "Dawn greeting," July 31–August 1, 1978









"I thought the space slug should be sort of repulsive and this fleshy pink color, like a membrane inside out, yet also dry and leathery." MCQUARRIE

"Ralph did a bunch of designs for the space slug, and George liked those. So when I sculpted the slug, I just worked off of Ralph's design from a piece of paper that was handed to me by Lucas. Surprisingly there was not a lot of worrying about those kinds of details. It was just, 'We need a space slug to come out of a hole in a meteor' and it's like, 'Okay, sure.'" TIPPETT

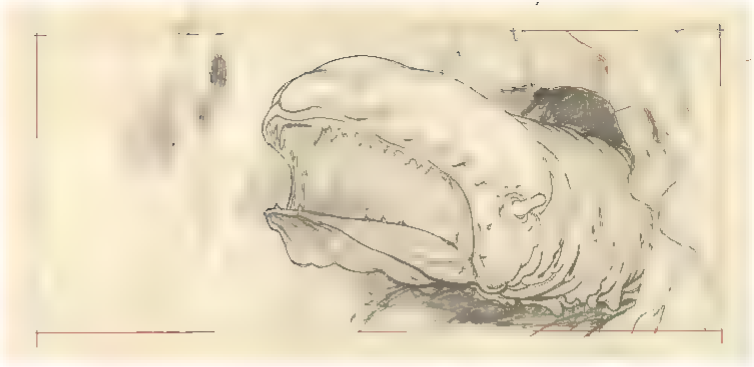
"When I was shooting stuff I would try to have a print of something up there that would tell us what the hell we were trying to achieve. So Ralph's work was frequently our only source of the look of the movie. That was it. And thank God that was it." KEN RALSTON, VISUAL EFFECTS CAMERAMAN

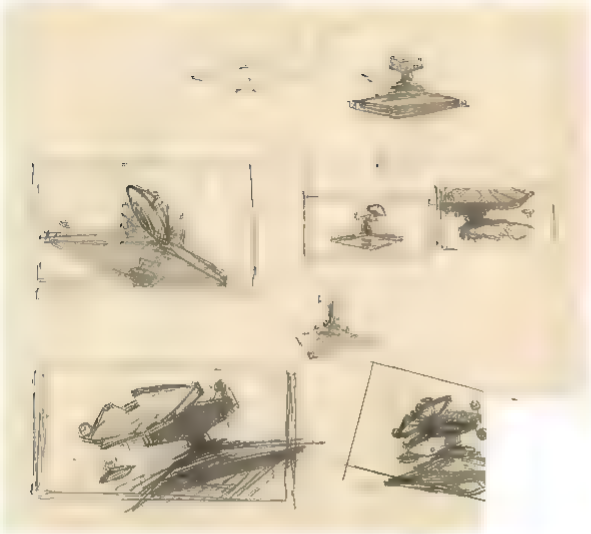
Thumbnail sketches, space slug

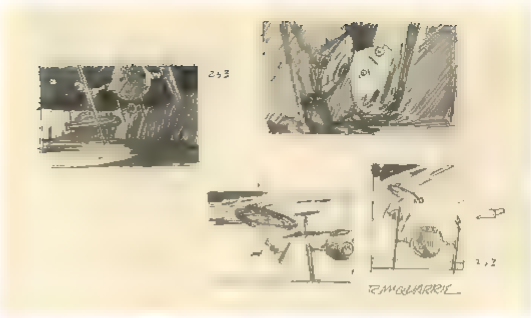
Concept sketches, space slug

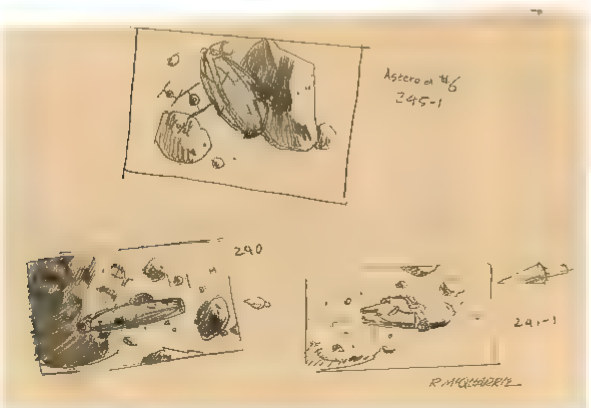
Drawing for production illustration, "Giant worm"

n Production illustration, "Giant worm," July 20–24, 1978









I knew that George wanted the asteroids colliding. Tremendous collisions!

"Quite a lot of things just went to the tile pencil stage, or they were pen-and-ink drawings, and we didn't take them any further than that. We didn't develop all the sketches, only part of them."
McQUARRIE

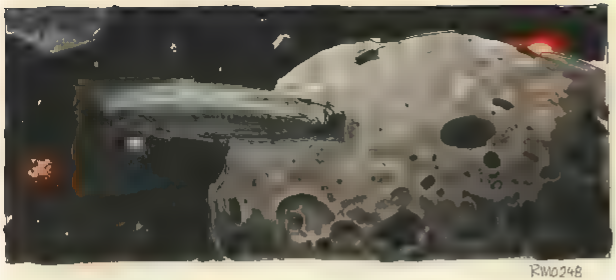
- Thumbnail sketches, the *Millennium Falcon* asteroid chase

  [illegible]

Concept sketch, the *Millennium Falcon* and asteroids

Concept sketches for production illustration, "Falcon into crater"

Production illustration "Falcon into crater," July 12, 1978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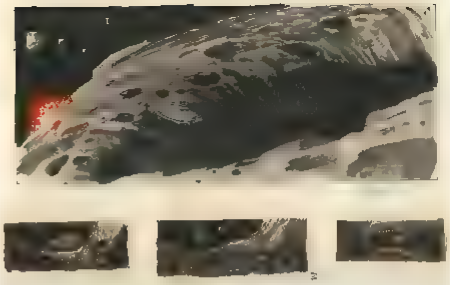
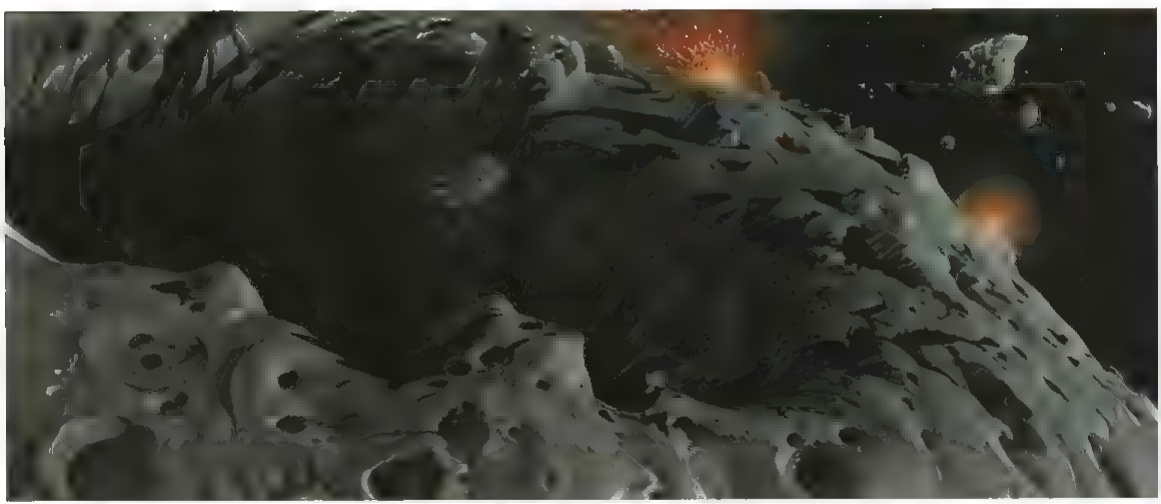




Gary Kurtz wanted a big spaceship painting, a wow one for this particular film that could be used in a series that was going into a trailer." MEQUAAR 8

Thumbnail sketches, Star Destroyers over Hoth

Concept sketch, Vader's Star Destroyer bridge

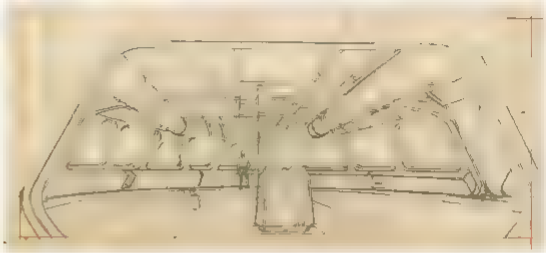
Production illustration, Star Destroyers over Hoth

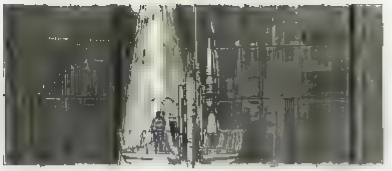
Thumbnail sketches, Vader's Star Destroyer bridge

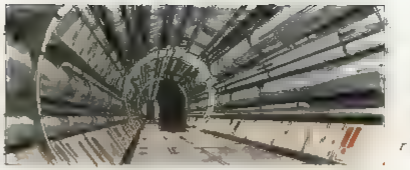
Concept sketch, Vader's Star Destroyer bridge

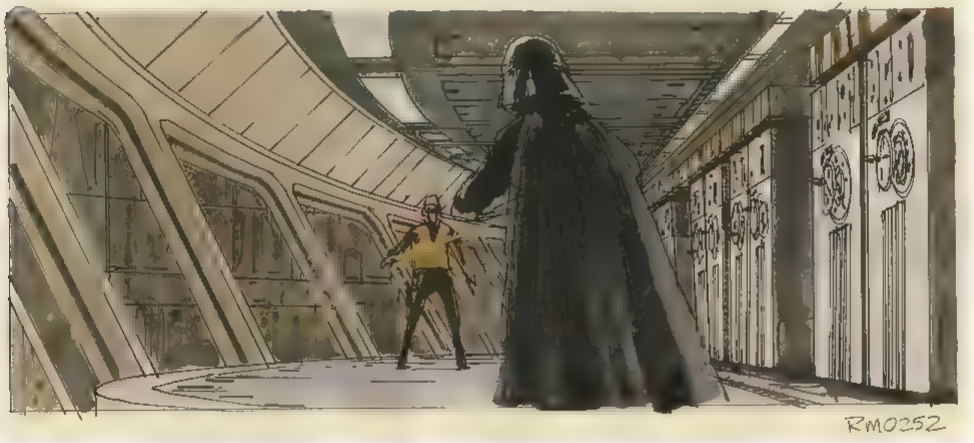
Drawings for production illustration, Vader's Star Destroyer bridge

Production illustration, Vader's Star Destroyer bridge





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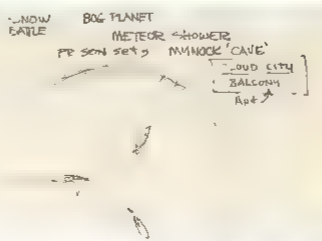
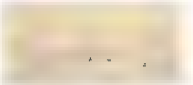

SNOW BATTLE
BOG PLANET
METEOR SHOWER
FF SCN set 9
MYNOCK 'CAVE'
CLOUD CITY
BALCONY
Apt

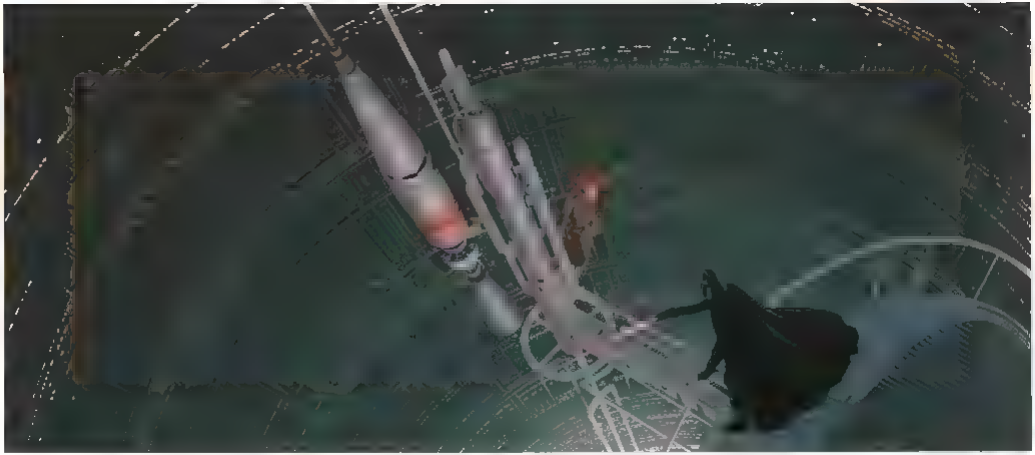
Concept sketches, Cloud City reactor vane

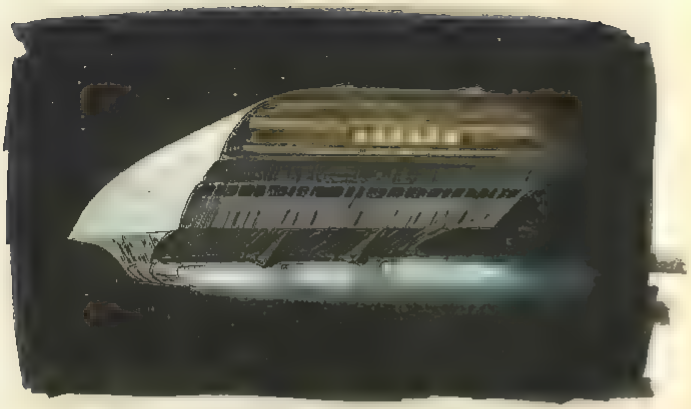
Concept sketch, Darth Vader and Luke in Cloud City reactor vane

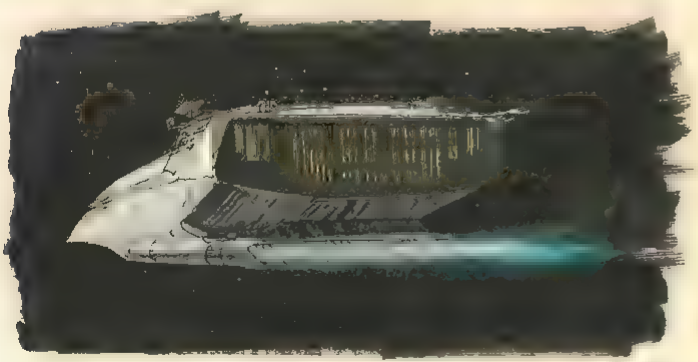
Thumbnail and concept sketches, Cloud City reactor vane

Concept sketches, Cloud City reactor vane









There were some things that I suggested, such as a round window in the door. The designer decided a square window would be better. So when I went up and saw the square one, he changed it back to the round one.

"George wanted a weapon with a lot of complexity and texture, and also one that looked powerful in a scene. I made some odd-shaped hook-like devices that could be used in some mechanical sense, and that was used to extract some light-sensitive machinery. The floor is like an assembly with panels you can take out to gain access to various control wiring, tubing runs, and so forth." — McQUARRIE

Concept sketches, large rebel ship

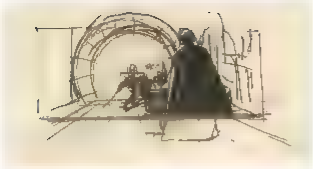
Thumbnail sketches, Cloud City window

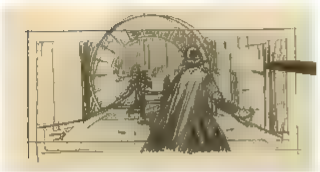
Concept sketches (from transparency), Cloud City interior work room

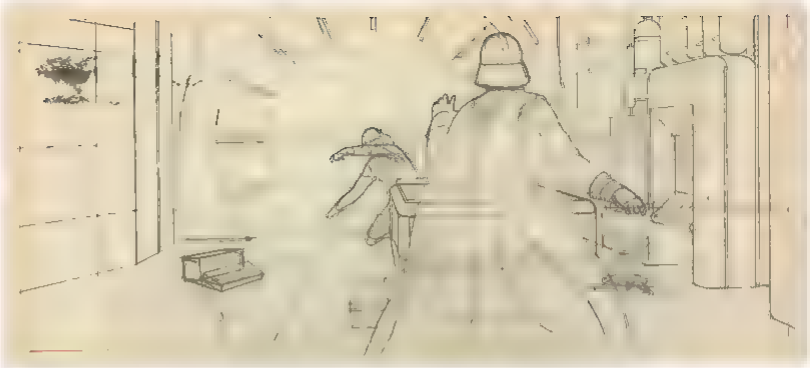
Thumbnail sketches for production illustration, "Sword fight, interior work room"

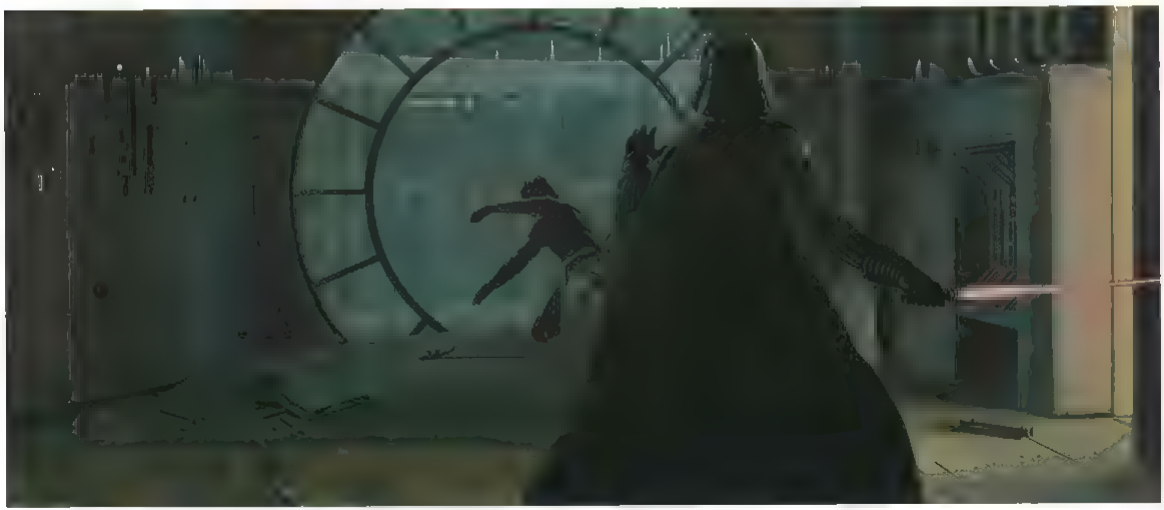
Drawing for production illustration, "Sword fight, interior work room"

Production illustration, "Sword fight, interior work room," August [illegible] 1979









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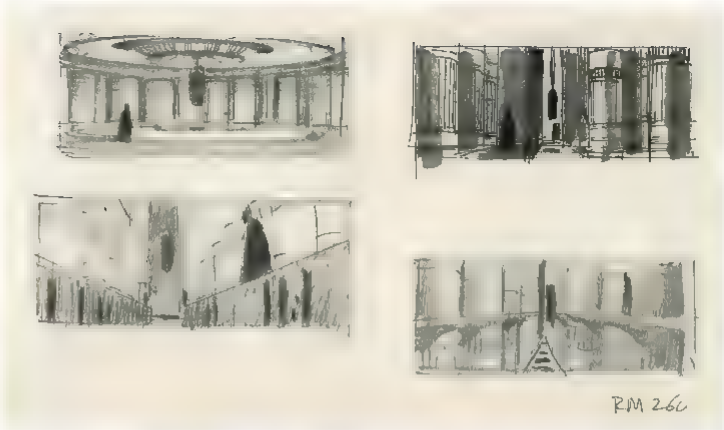
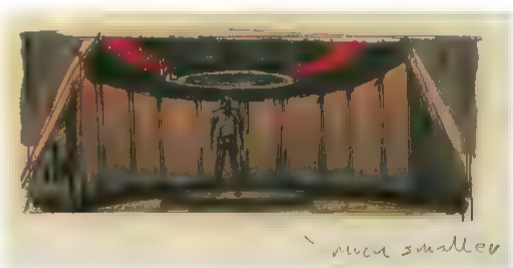




C

Thumbnail and concept sketches. Cloud City freezing chamber.

Concept sketch. body in frozen carbonite.

Thumbnail sketch. Cloud City freezing chamber.

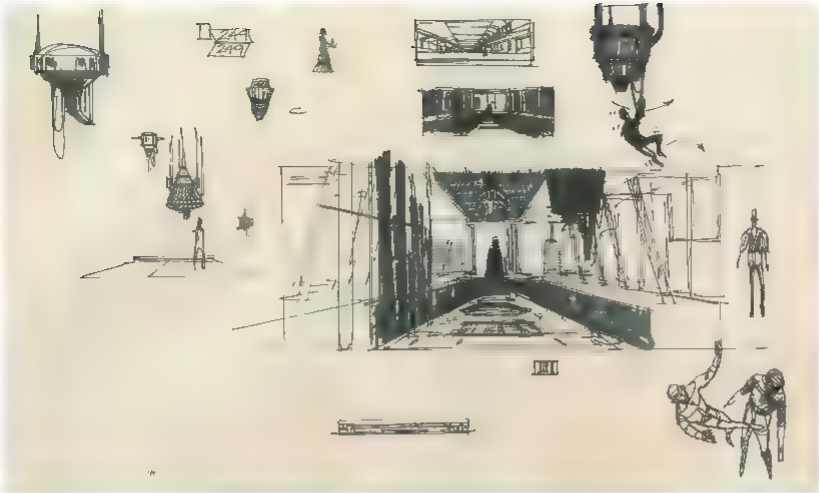
Thumbnail sketches. Cloud City freezing chamber and concept sketches. Luke hanging.

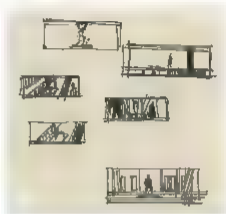
Thumbnail and concept sketches. Cloud City freezing chamber.

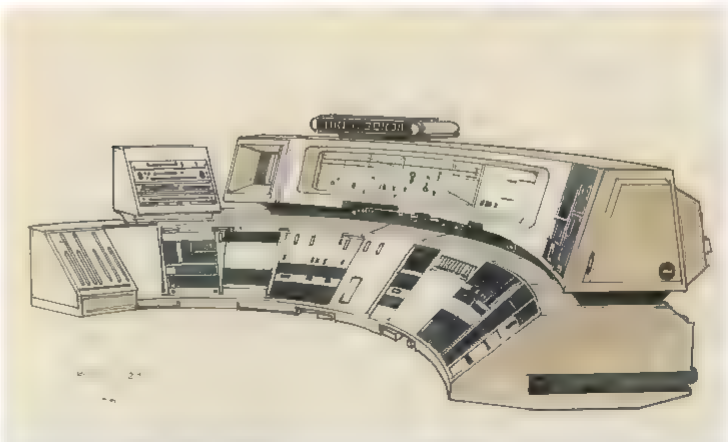
Concept sketch. carbonite freezing console.

Concept sketches. frozen carbonite and freezing console.

Concept sketch. carbonite freezing console. January 1979.

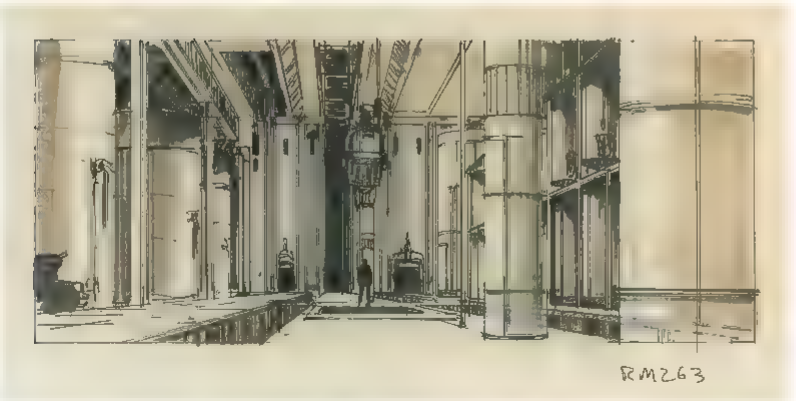






"[illegible] brought to a stock mill, a foundry-like atmosphere because they were going to have this big radio and they were going to form metal. This was an industrial process that I made up. I just put tanks in and vertical tubing, so that they would be a foreground that you could shoot through.

"But later, in contemplating this sword fight, we felt that the room we had was not dramatic enough and wasn't going to give the right atmosphere. Due to some suggestions from Kershner, Gary [illegible] we moved up going with a different plan that Norman Reynolds designed. The room is kind of a void feeling now, with a circular platform." McQUARRIE



Concept sketches for production illustration, "Freezing plant"

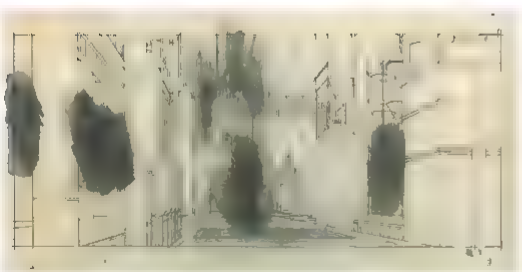
3 Preliminary illustration, "Freezing plant"

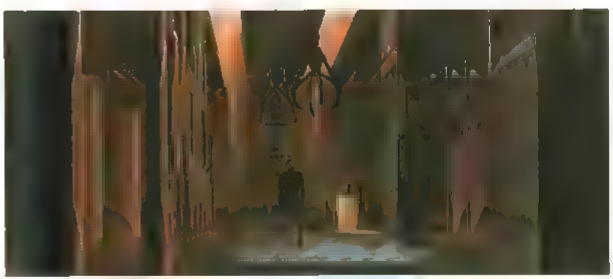
4 Drawing for production illustration, "Freezing plant"

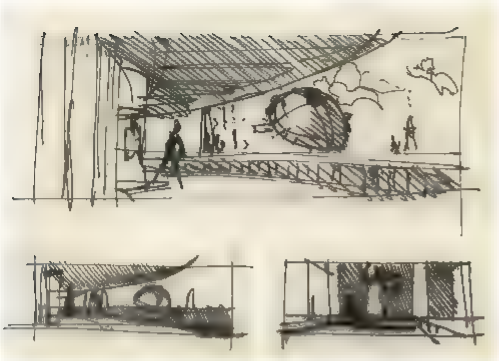
Production illustration "Freezing plant," Fall 1978

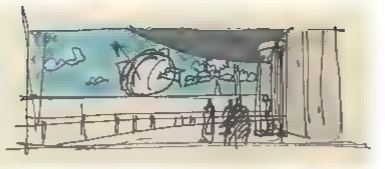
[illegible] reconstruction of freezing chamber, not established in movie as a Norman Reynolds design (see photo 2, page [illegible])

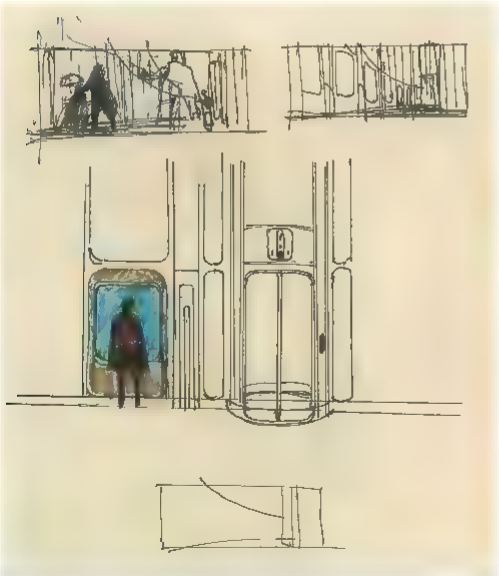
[illegible] Detail from production illustration, "Freezing plant," Fall 1978

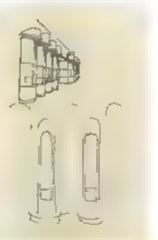


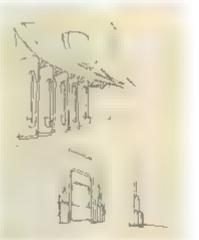


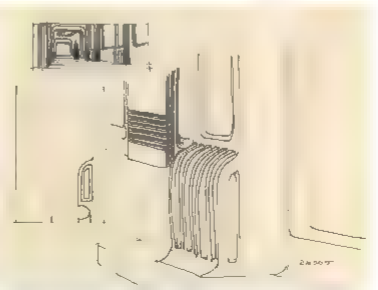


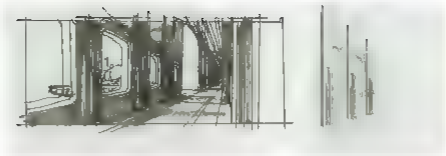


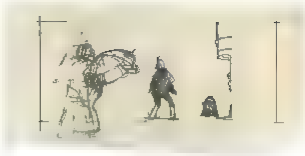


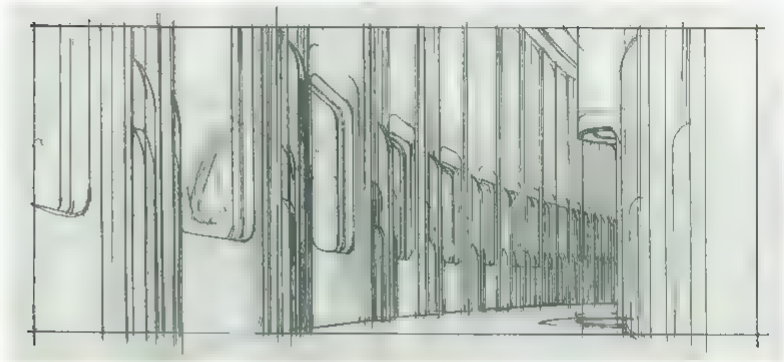


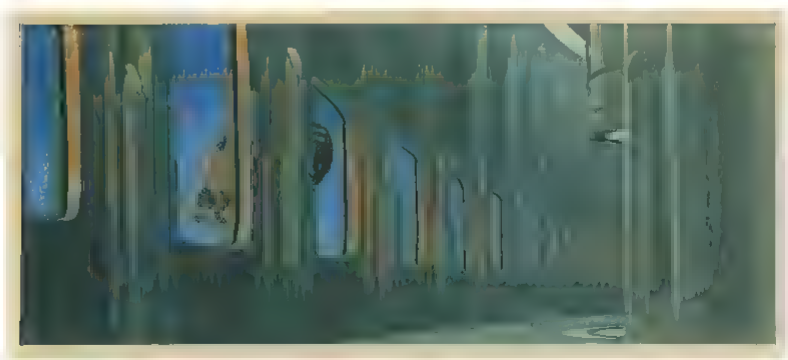












3 a Thumbnail sketches, Boba Fett's ship at Cloud City

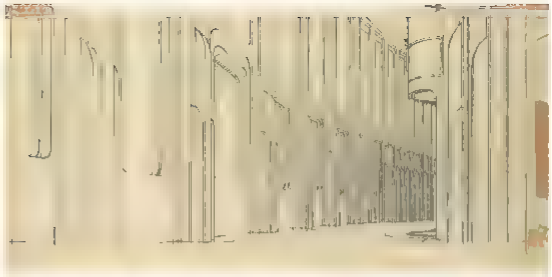
3 Concept sketch, Boba Fett's ship at Cloud City

4–6 Thumbnail and concept sketches, Cloud City interiors

9 Thumbnail sketch, "East Landing Platform"

10 Drawing for preliminary illustration, "East Landing Platform"

11 Preliminary illustration, "East Landing Platform"



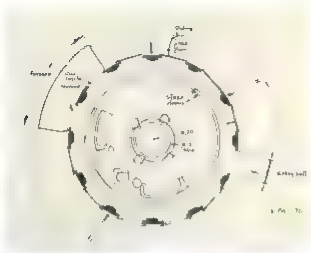
"The general effect of my Cloud City design is still there in the film. Norman [Reynolds] changed the interior a lot. Most of the spaces I had conceived of were much larger than available stage space would allow. They needed a stage they could really work on; they didn't want every shot to be a matte shot. There were only a couple of shots where they took the staged set and enlarged it with matte paintings. The stage was fairly large, but the space was still limited, so they'd take it apart occasionally and rework it to create other places in the city and make everything seem larger." **McQUARRIE**

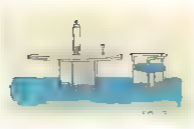
Drawings for production illustration, version 1, "East Landing Platform"
These drawings, on two separate pieces of paper, are presented backgrounded here with overlapped to the approximate position.

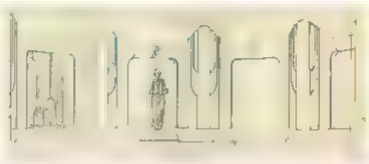
2 Drawing for production illustration, version 2, "East Landing Platform"
As the finished shot, this drawing establishes the view of Bespin from the viewing window for the Action scene in Block [illegible].

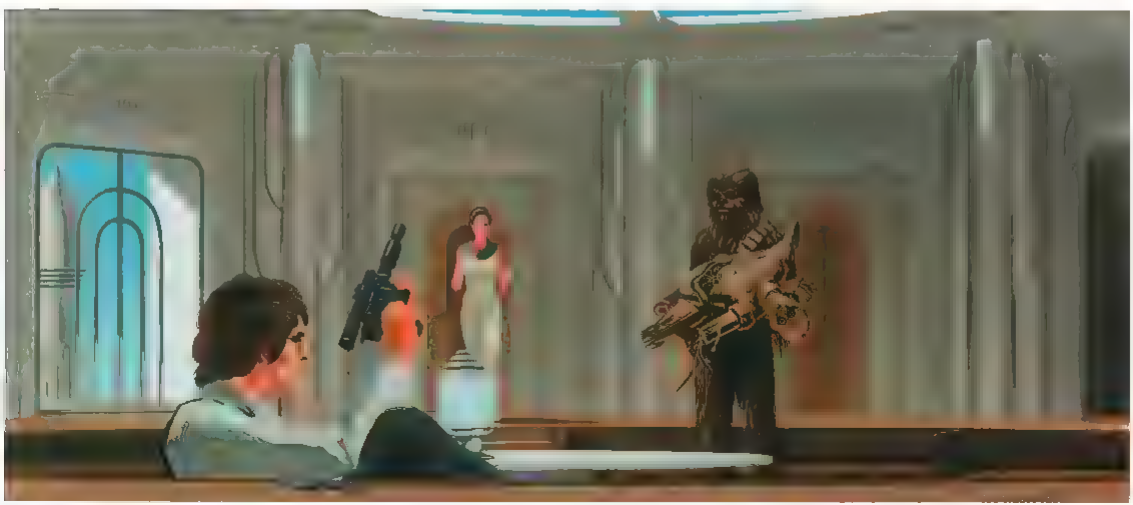
3 Production illustration, "East Landing Platform," September 25–26, 1978
Below, an alternate angle was derived from early drawings by Ralph McQuarrie. The top of the mound is the same shape when each appears a small reflective area.

4 Concept sketches, Cloud City apartment









"I've given the apartment a sunken living-room look which added to the luxury aspect of the place and Art Deco columns with lights in them and sliding doors. There is a big skylight with sun coming in, which was a requirement George asked for. He wanted to see this room full of sunlight." **McQUARRIE**

"During the development stages, we often waited until we could talk with George and get his ideas before we actually finalized anything. If George is out of town, more often than not, a great many things are left hanging until he comes back." **McQUARRIE**

Concept layout, Cloud City apartment

Concept sketches, Cloud City apartment furniture

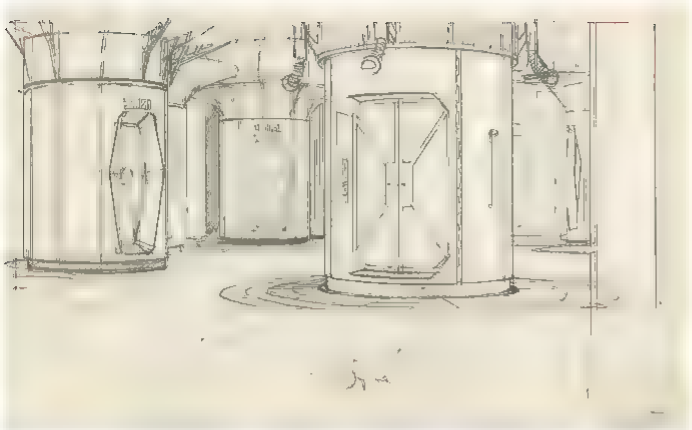
Thumbnail sketch, Cloud City apartment

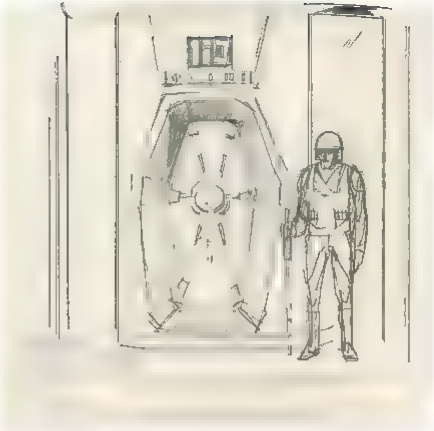
Concept sketches, Cloud City apartment

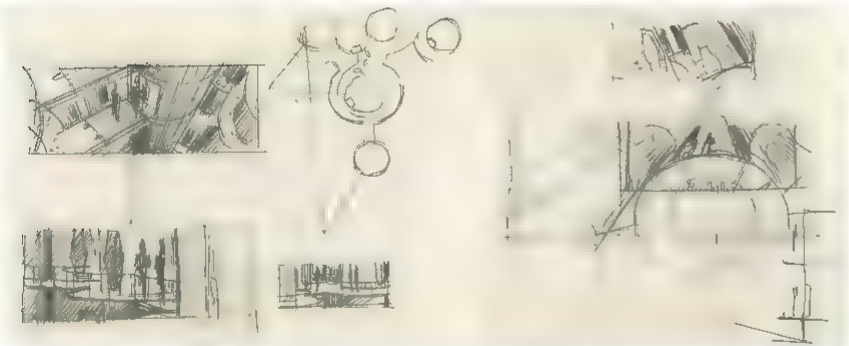
Drawings for production illustration, Cloud City apartment

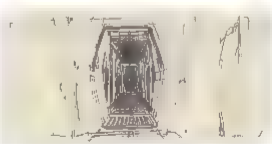
Production illustration, Cloud City apartment
McQuarrie drew a Kennedy-era reference when painting this scene.

Detail from production illustration, Cloud City apartment









1 Drawing for illustration Cloud City prison
This drawing was later retraced as a finished painting.

2 Thumbnail and concept sketches Cloud City prison

3 Drawing, Cloud City prison cell, December 1978

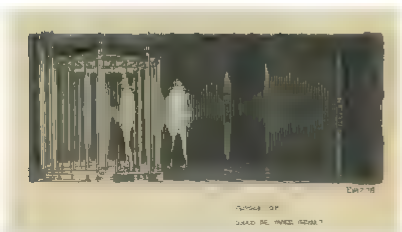
4 Concept sketch, Cloud City prison

5 Thumbnail sketches for illustration Cloud City prison and concept sketches, prisoner

6 Concept sketches, Cloud City prison doors and prisoner

closed cupboard with magic things and contents
PMZ76

PMZ77



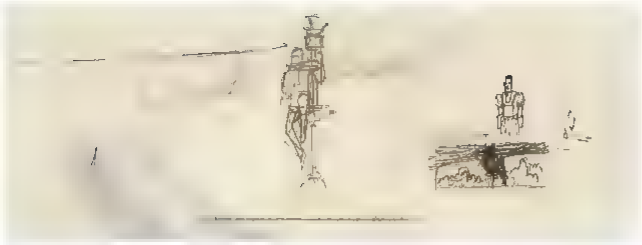
"It's not a full-fledged prison, but all those doorways around the side represent cells. The little slots of light coming out under the door is where you could push a tray of food in.

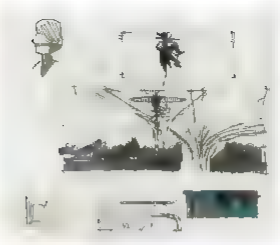
It seemed to make a more interesting room and focus on the character by putting him under the light. There's something about putting a source of light on the prisoner. It's the one that everyone's concentrating on. He can hardly see anybody else, but everybody can see him." McQUARRIE

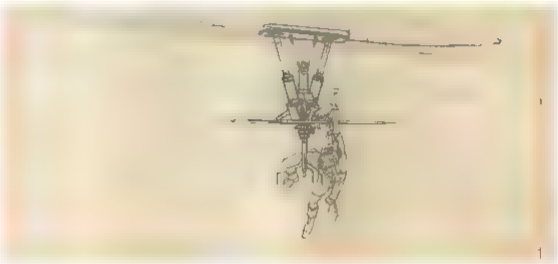
Production illustration, Cloud City prison

Concept sketches, Cloud City prisoner

→ Detail from production illustration, Cloud City prison







"I made up these clouds [...] They would be nice, big thunder clouds with evening sun on them." MCQUARRIE

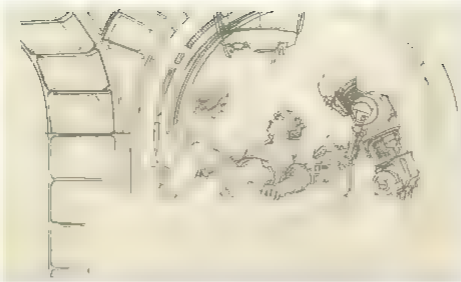
"Thumbnail and concept sketches Luke hanging on vane

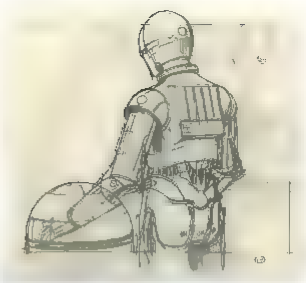
Preliminary illustration, Luke hanging on vane

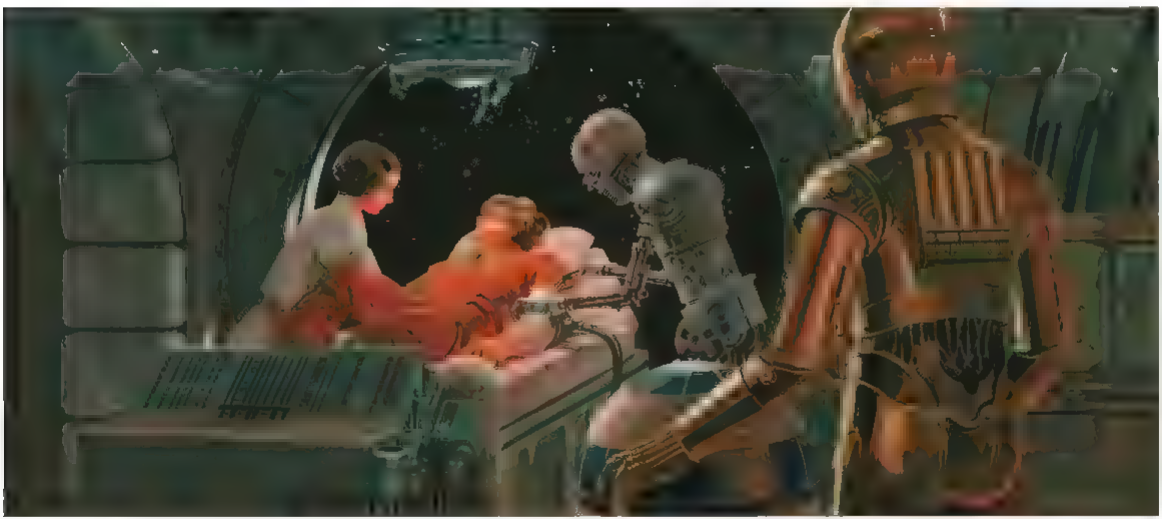
Drawing for production illustration, Luke hanging on vane

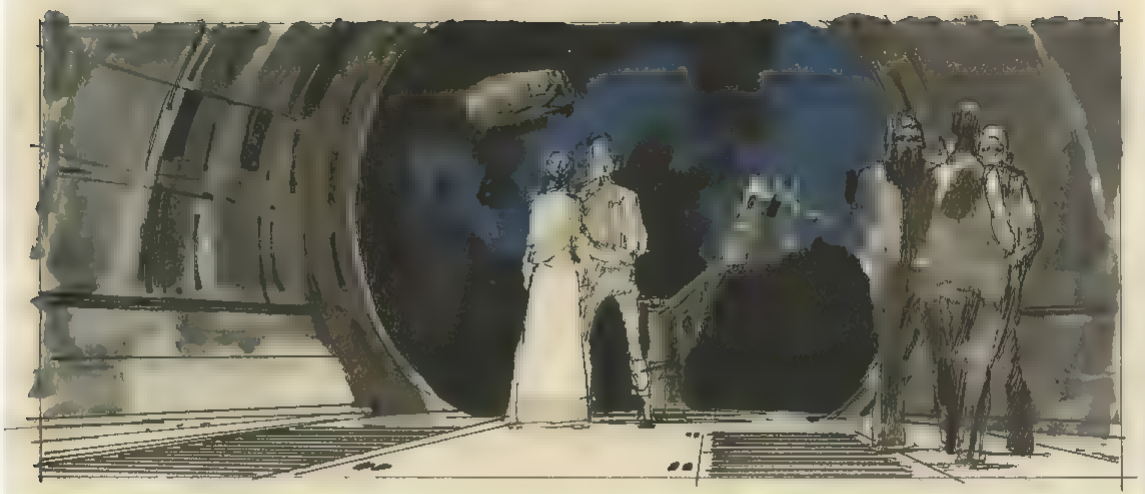
Production illustration, Luke hanging on vane

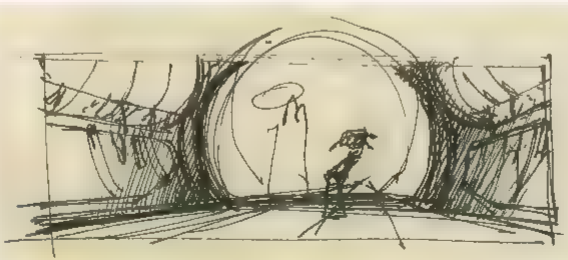
Detail from production illustration, Luke hanging on vane

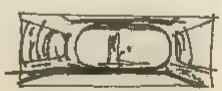












Concept sketch for production illustration, Luke in medical bay

Drawings for production illustration, Luke in medical bay

[illegible]

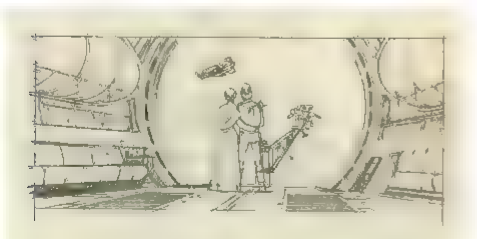
a Production illustration, Luke in medical bay

b Concept sketch for production illustration, "Luke and Leia (Star Cruiser)" (No. [illegible])

c Thumbnail sketches for production illustration "Luke and Leia (Star Cruiser)" (No. [illegible])

"George wanted a round window there, with the starry sky beyond. This is probably the very tip of the front of the ship, and there is a big pair of binoculars here for viewing; it's an observation deck.

"I found out working with designer Ken Adam on *Star Trek* that this is a very unusual thing – for a production designer to do a painting like this – because of the time involved." **MCQUARRIE**



Drawings for production illustration "Luke and Leia (Star Cruiser)" (No. 1).

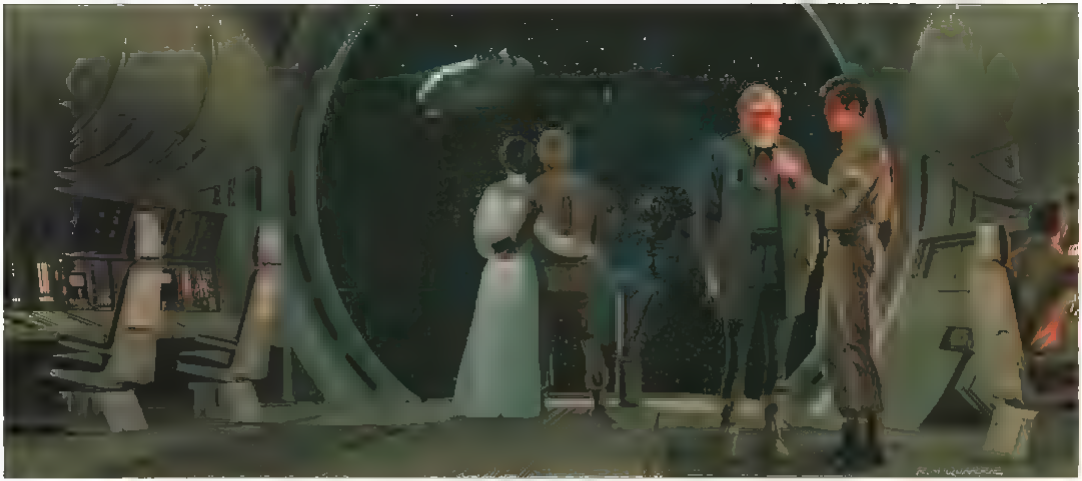
Sketch for production illustration "Luke and Leia (Star Cruiser)" (No. 3).

Production illustration, "Luke and Leia (Star Cruiser)" (No. 1).

A view of the interior of the spacecraft window, as in the drawing for the "Star Destroyer bridge (looking aft right-hand inboard side)" (see page 51).

1. Production illustration, "Luke and Leia (Star Cruiser)" (No. 2), October 3, 1978

NOTE The Empire Strikes Back *pre-production concepts continue on page 378.*



VADER IN FLAMES LOGO

The Vader in flames patch design started as a marketing logo and we used it on the uniform of the crew on Norway. We had enough of those patches made that I gave them away to people who visited the set. It was an all purpose logo. KURTZ

Thumbnail sketches for *Empire Strikes Back* logo

a. Concept for *The Empire Strikes Back* logo

Logo illustration with acetate overlay, featuring painted lettering, version 1 for *The Empire Strikes Back* logo

Illustration version 1 for *The Empire Strikes Back* logo

c. Cast and crew patch *The Empire Strikes Back* logo

b. The "Vader in flames" artwork was prominently used as an embroidered patch affixed to the crew-issued snowsuits used on location in Norway.

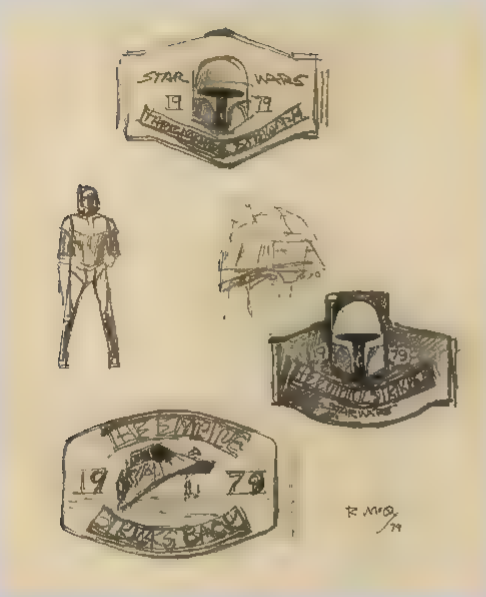
d. Illustration version 1 with acetate-type overlay, *The Empire Strikes Back* logo

Illustration version 2, with alternate acetate-type overlay, *The Empire Strikes Back* logo

Illustration version 2 *The Empire Strikes Back* logo

VADER 'N FLAMES LOGO CIRCA 1978 969

APPAREL


STAR WARS
19 79
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

19 79
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
STAR WARS

LONDON
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STAR WARS

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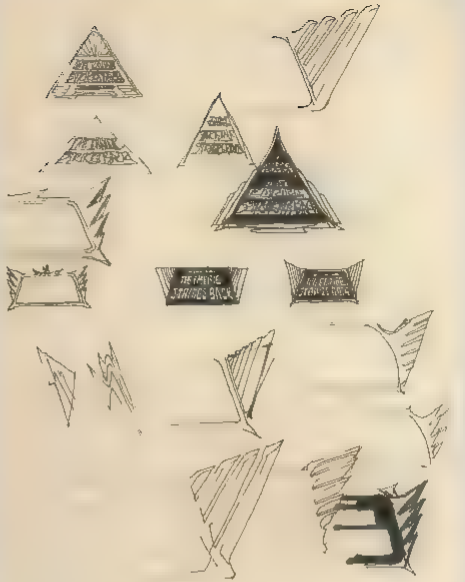
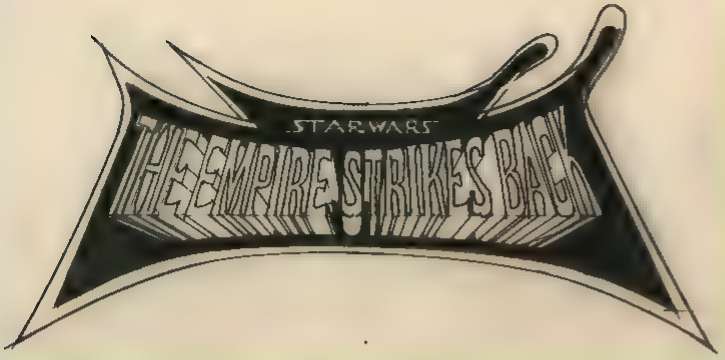
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
STAR WARS



Concept sketches, belt buckle

Concept sketches, *The Empire Strikes Back* logo for T-shirt design


STAR WARS
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

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STAR WARS
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THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

STAR WARS
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

a Concept sketches, *The Empire Strikes Back* logo for T-shirt design

b Concept sketches, *The Empire Strikes Back* T-shirt designs

c [illegible]

Drawing, Luke on tauntaun

STAR WARS
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

SOUNDS OF SPACE CONCERT POSTER

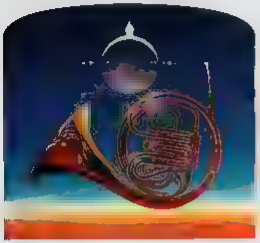
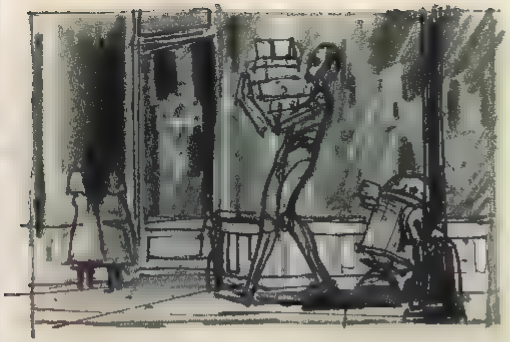


Illustration for T shirt design. Luke on tauntaun
No ... that the illustration was intended for we ... were producing

3 **Illustrations. Sounds of Space concert poster**
In April 1978 the sounds of four symphony ... we ... years in the ... from ... Boyd ... featuring ... from Star Wars, Close Encounters, 2001 ... A Space Odyssey, Flash Gordon, etc. The Planets ... Mason ... was ... to create artwork for the ... concert ... program



LUCASFILM HOLIDAY CARDS

RALPH MCQUARRIE ILLUSTRATED his first Lucasfilm holiday card in 1978. Once again McQuarrie was called on to assist on another project as a result of his boundless talent. "George liked Ralph's work a lot and thought that a science-fiction Christmas card would be fun," says producer Gary Kurtz. "I think that first one was quite a fun one. It grew out of the other work. We would talk about something like that and say, 'Well we need a Christmas card, why not have Ralph do it.'"

McQuarrie produced holiday cards for the company regularly through 1983 and then returned to illustrate two more holiday cards for Lucasfilm in 1994 and 1995 (see volume 2, pages 100–101, 148–49, 280–81, 283). He also produced a corporate moving card in 1979 (see volume 2, pages 98–99). He enjoyed working on the festive projects; ideas sometimes originated with Lucas and sometimes with McQuarrie. "I think Ralph came up with some ideas," says Kurtz. "I know the one he did for *Empire*—the Dickens-style card—we talked about doing the robots in an 1890s London street. I think Ralph had some ideas and George had some ideas, and we had several possibilities each year. I couldn't tell you where all of them came from."

McQuarrie's holiday card paintings cover a variety of subjects including the droids, Yoda, and the Ewoks. They were distributed annually to both the US and UK *Star Wars* teams, sometimes signed by Lucas and/or Kurtz. The McQuarrie holiday cards are highly sought after by *Star Wars* collectors, and today Lucasfilm continues the tradition of producing original cards in the tradition McQuarrie established every year.

Thumbnail sketch for Lucasfilm holiday card, droids with gifts, 1978

Concept sketches, Lucasfilm holiday card

Illustration for Lucasfilm holiday card, R2-D2 and C-3PO with gifts, December 1978

18
MERRY CHRISTMAS
18
R.M.C.
78

ELSTREE STUDIOS

RALPH MCQUARRIE ARRIVED IN THE UK on October 29, 1978, to continue his work on *The Empire Strikes Back*. He was not unfamiliar with working abroad, having spent time in London in 1977 working with production designer Ken Adam on a *Star Trek* feature film that never came to fruition. He was to work with production designer Norman Reynolds and the art department at Elstree Studios. "There were four offices running down the corridor in the art department," recalls art director Alan Tomkins. "And then a big room where we had ten drawing boards, with screens in between. Ralph was in the first office opposite the big main drawing office. The other offices were occupied by Norman Reynolds, set decorator Michael Ford, and construction manager Bill Welch. We all got on like a house on fire."

McQuarrie spent time sketching various designs as required by Irvin Kershner, Gary Kurtz, and Reynolds. He also continued working on his collection of production illustrations. "I'm working right now with Norman Reynolds, because Norman is really the designer and wants to contribute some major looks to some of the things," said McQuarrie at the time. "George has left part of it open, as much to say, 'Norman, you don't have to do everything from something Ralph has done. You can originate things."

Reynolds spent a great deal of his time working on the film's sets in close conference with the director. He reviewed all of McQuarrie's material for inspiration but opted to go his own way with a number of designs. "Ralph McQuarrie, Joe Johnston, and I worked on the initial designs and the paintings of the sets and then turned them over to Kersh, Gary, and Norman," says Lucas. "When I was in the UK, I monitored the sets and put in my two cents' worth, but the designers went off on their own interpretations. The designs are fairly close to my conception, but there are differences, some of which are improvements and some of which I'm not that crazy about." One noteworthy example was the carbon freezing chamber where Luke and Vader began their climactic lightsaber duel. Reynolds departed radically from McQuarrie's original concept, opting for a more abstract design filled with light and smoke.

McQuarrie described Reynolds as an "English gentleman" who was also very firm. "He said, in effect, you can design things over there in the corner; we're gonna do our thing," said McQuarrie. By all accounts, each of the two formidable men had a strong mutual respect for the other's work. "Norman contributed a hell of a lot of drawings," McQuarrie said. "And they were very interesting for the ideas he involved, and many things that got into the film are very much based a lot on his drawings."

"England was quite heavily structured and hierarchal, union wise," says Kurtz. "This was the first picture that Norman was production designer on, up until that point he had been senior art director. He knew Ralph's contribution was strong, and he wanted to make sure that he established the structure of the art department in a clear way, and that he was the one that was in charge. But Norman really appreciated Ralph being there, and he said many times that he thought Ralph's contribution was substantial."

While the film's designs were not McQuarrie's alone, he still made numerous contributions. "Yeah, I think my ideas are showing quite often, although not so much as they did on the first film," said McQuarrie, "Because there have been more people that have been given more of a chance to do things. I think the first film seemed to charge ahead with what I had done. People went along with it because George was always there, and George liked the things that I had done, because they were reflections of what he wanted. And on this film, George wasn't there so the designers weren't listening to him directly. I'm not a heavy, you know, I haven't been in the film business a long time. I'm billed as 'production illustrator,' which is traditionally subordinate to almost everybody. I'm a sketch artist person. But it's been very interesting to be here and see what's going on."

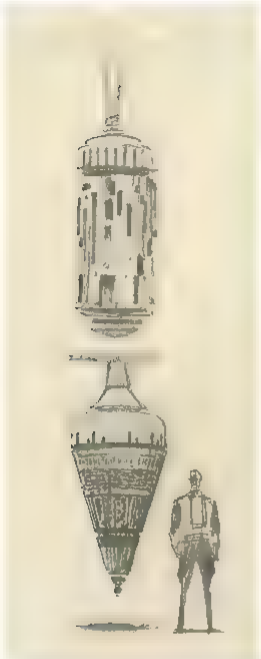
McQuarrie also worked with Kershner on a number of sketches for possible shots that he brought back to ILM for use in conceptualizing matte paintings later in the year. "I'm working on some paintings that will probably serve to show how the matte paintings can look, so that we're all clear," said McQuarrie. "Norman has taken over the interior of Cloud City. The difficulties of constructing the sort of rounded Jell-O mold forms I was interested in are going to be too great, too expensive to do, so Norman has made them a little more rigid, more crystalline. It's very good and works as well, perhaps better."

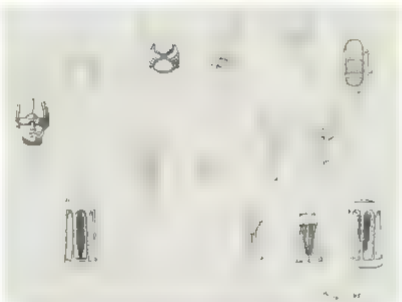
"Ralph always had a really strong work ethic, and he would work late sometimes," says Kurtz. "I remember once or twice at the end of the day it was quite late, I was getting ready to leave, and he was still there. And I would tell him to go home. But he was always quite dedicated to setting himself a goal for each piece of work and getting it done by a certain time. I think he had a good time over here; it was a very interesting environment on that picture."

McQuarrie felt it was beneficial to view the live-action photography in London, and he also enjoyed the downtime where he explored the countryside. "To me the UK is completely fascinating," McQuarrie said. "I'm a visually oriented type, and I'm just enjoying very much seeing the general scene that perhaps becomes almost non-existent for an Englishman. The railway stations and the brick structures that are here are terrific to me."

NOTE The Empire Strikes Back *pre-production concepts continue from page 367.*

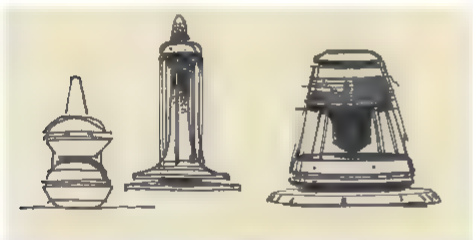
1 Ralph McQuarrie with fellow art department members, led by production designer Norman Reynolds, on the stage at Elstree. The transport vehicle prop they are gathered around was a concept featured in some of McQuarrie's production illustrations for *Star Wars* (see pages 62–63 and 105 [of]).

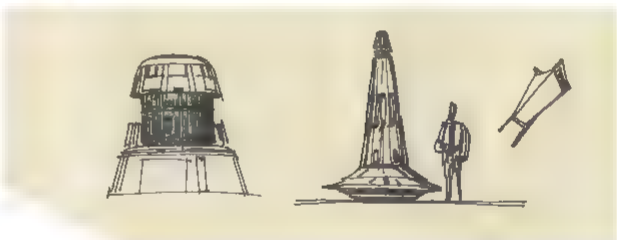


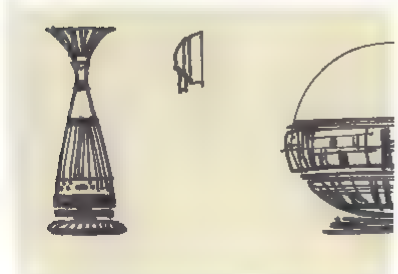


Concepts sketches, Cloud City interior décor designs, November 1978

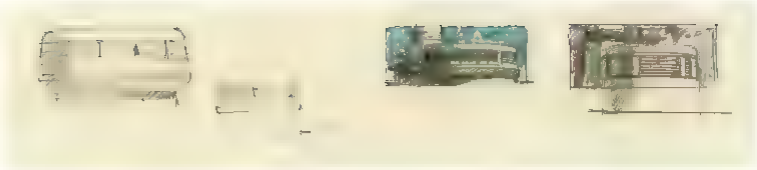
When McQuarrie commenced a period at Elstree Studios he began using his drawings with a camera, applying colors to enhance







"We photographed the action in this little window here and the rest of it was going to be a matte painting. Cloud car models were going to soar by and the cloud background would probably be a real cloud background." McQUARRIE



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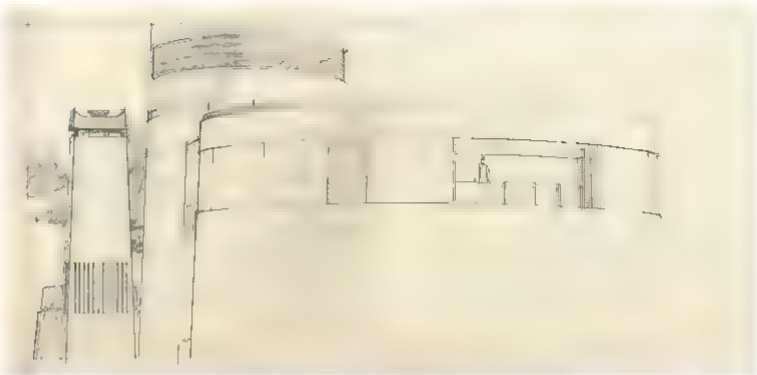


9

10

8, 9 Concept sketches, Cloud City wall and door designs, November 1978

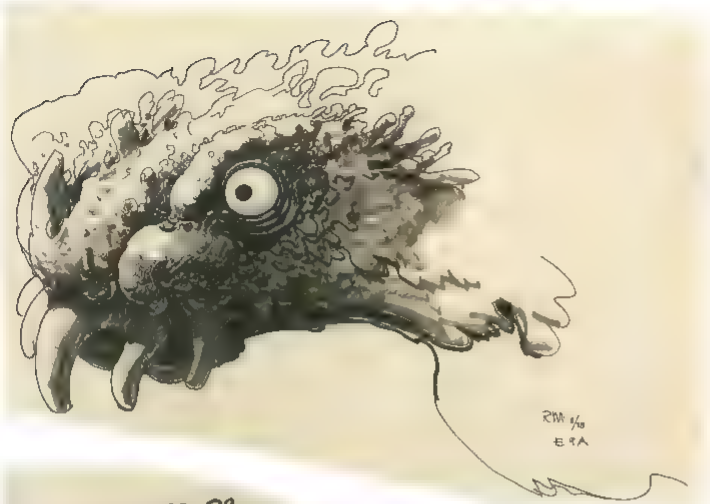
8 Concept sketches, Cloud City décor designs
[illegible] appear in Jedi [illegible] Book [illegible] number

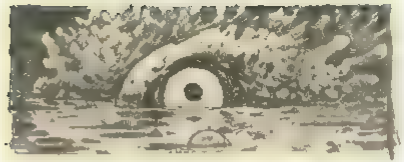
9 Thumbnail sketches Cloud City apartment

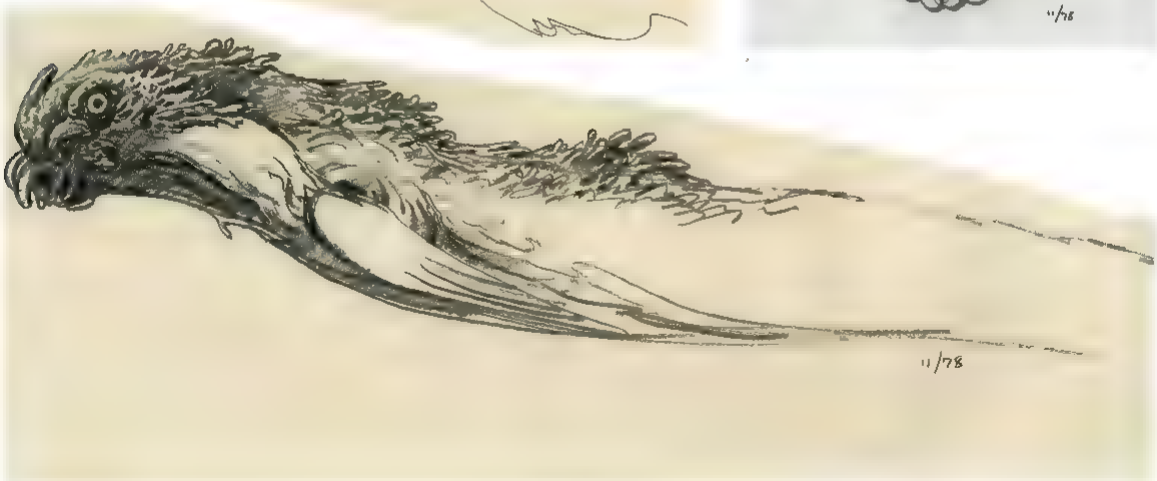
10 Drawing, Cloud City apartment

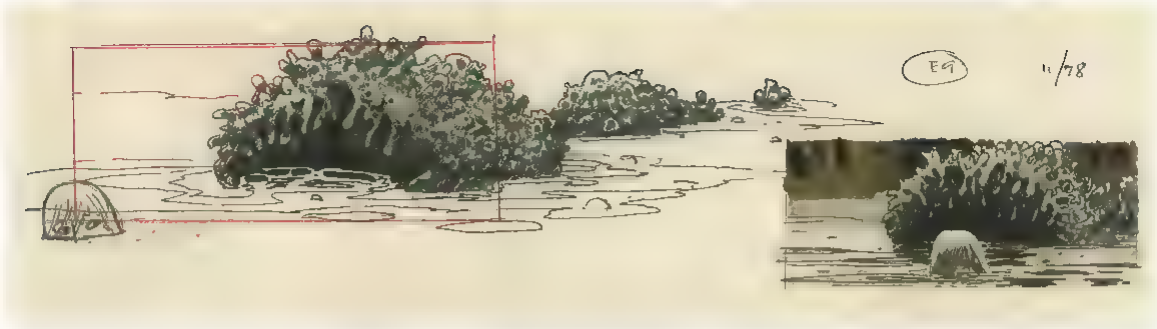
10 Production illustration, Cloud City apartment circa Spring 1979
[illegible]

EDITOR'S NOTE: Detail from production illustration, Cloud City apartment, circa Spring 1979









"Ralph's work is not a hodgepodge of taking different artists' work and making it his own. Something tells me to a certain extent, he's one of those people that was born with this." RALSTON

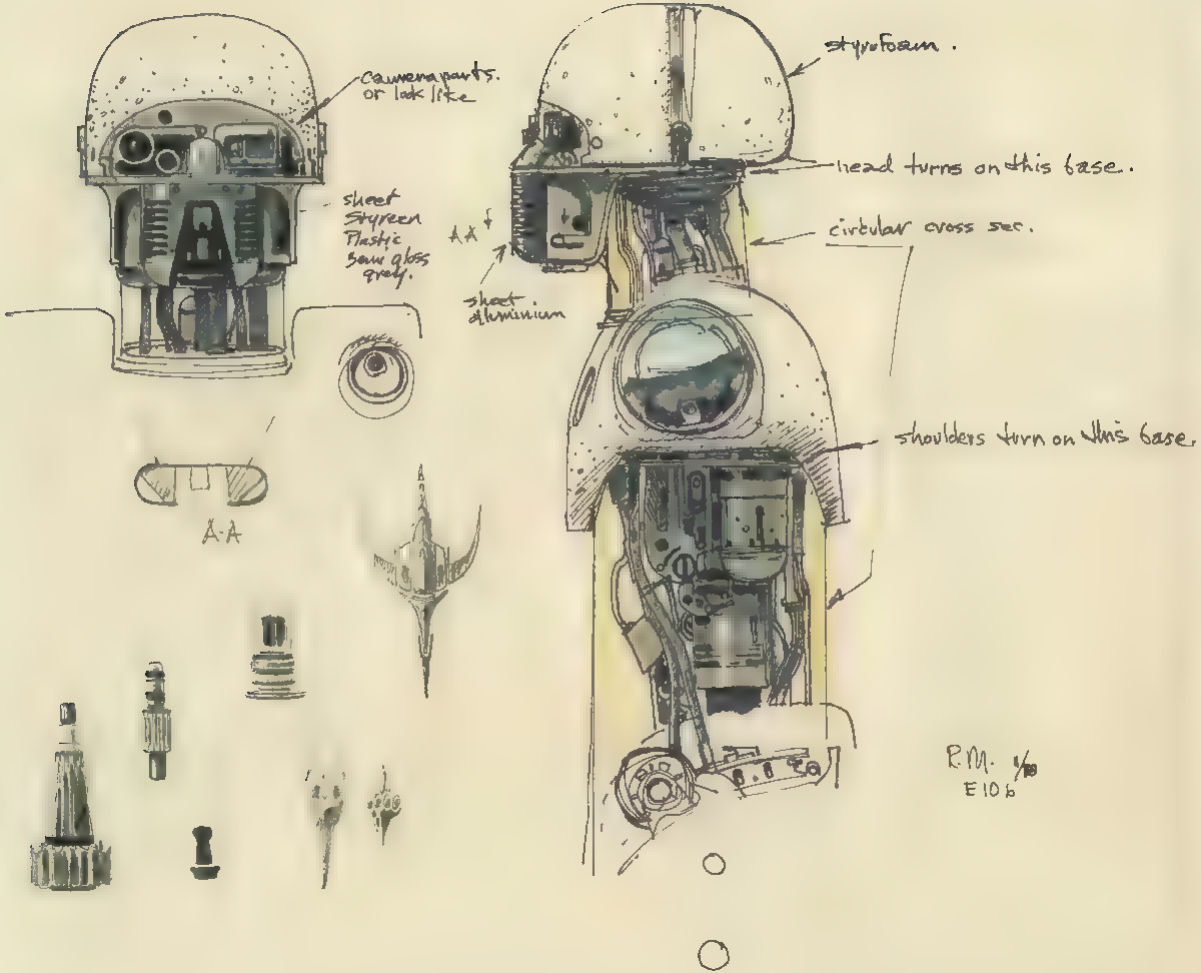
I made sketches for a lot of creatures on this planet and we're going to try to get a few in the picture." MCQUARRIE

a Concept sketches, swamp creature, November 1978

Concept sketches, Luke evades swamp creature

b Technical sketch, swamp creature

An Ore-ik shows a "test" creature "built" to operate the sites "robots" from below the water.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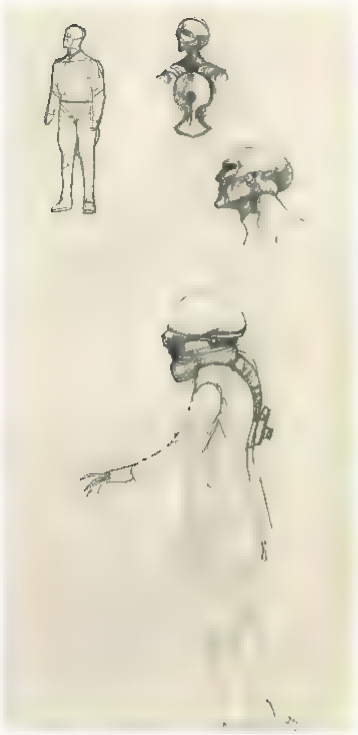

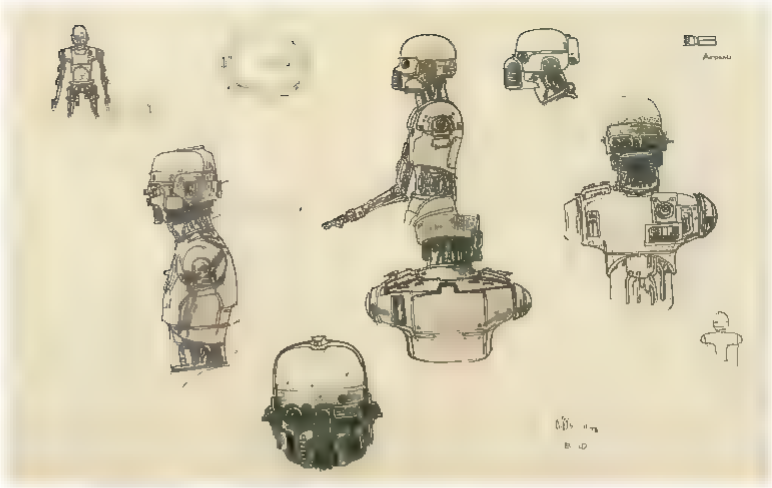

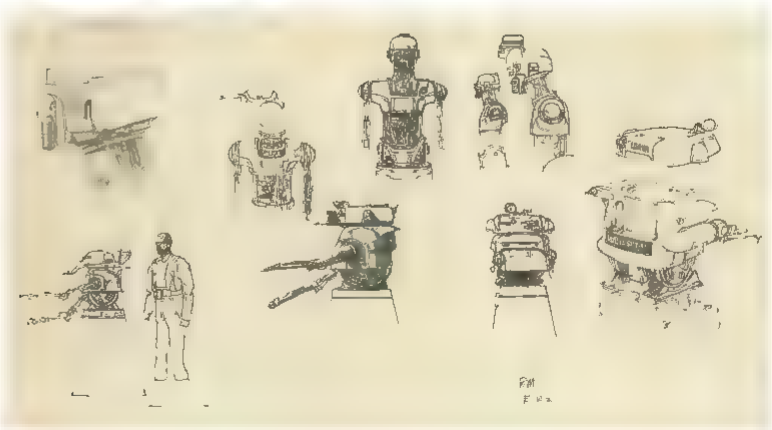

1 Concept sketch medical droid and Cloud City décor, circa November 1978

2 Concept sketches medical droid, circa November 1978

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACRYLIC PAINTS Paints, typically water-soluble and quick drying, consisting of pigment in an acrylic plastic emulsion.

ANAMORPHIC Cinematography format involving an image that is squeezed horizontally onto a film frame when photographed, then expanded horizontally when projected.

BI-PACK METHOD A visual effects compositing process where two pieces of film are run through a camera together, one on top of the other, as a means of combining separate images. One piece of film is pre-developed and carries an image which is contact printed onto the unexposed film along with the image captured by the lens.

BLUE SCREEN PROCESS A visual effects compositing process where objects are filmed in front of a blue screen in order to generate holdout mattes. The mattes are created through a photochemical process in which the blue colored background is turned to black. A reverse matte is made from the original matte, and these holdout mattes are used in an optical printer to protect specific areas of the film from exposure. The foreground is printed in one pass with one matte, and the background is printed in another pass with the reverse matte.

CEL-VINYL A type of paint specifically formulated for animation use; reproduces accurately when photographed.

CONCEPT SKETCH A form of illustration, often loose in nature, used to convey an idea before it is included in a final product.

COSTUME SKETCH A form of illustration used specifically to study a character's costume.

DAILIES The first prints of motion picture shots (often returned from a processing lab on a daily basis) used for internal review.

DRAWING A form of illustration, more precise than a sketch, accomplished in graphite or ink.

DRAWING FOR PRODUCTION ILLUSTRATION An illustration that outlines the elements of a production illustration at its scale and will be traced over to block in composition elements at different stages of the illustration's progression.

FRISKET A material that serves as a mask to prevent certain areas of an artwork from being painted.

GOUACHE A type of paint similar to watercolor, consisting of pigment in a binding agent emulsion with added materials, designed to be opaque.

ILLUSTRATION BOARD A rigid board with a paper surface on one side that serves as a surface for creating artwork.

KEY ART Artwork belonging to a select group of images that is used in marketing and publicity of a film.

LIVE-ACTION PLATES A motion picture shot containing live-action photography that is intended to be altered through visual effects work.

MATTE PAINTING A painted representation of a landscape or set, frequently on glass or board, used to create an environment and expand the scope of a shot. The painting has an open space for a live-action plate to be added and is also used to create the compositing matte that allows the live-action shot to be combined with the painting.

MEDIUM Material used to realize the subject. Common mediums used in McQuarrie's work include graphite, colored pencil, paint, ink, and marker.

OIL PAINTS Paints, non-water-soluble and slow to dry, consisting of pigment in an oil emulsion.

OPAQUE PROJECTOR A mechanical device that projects and enlarges or reduces opaque flat images such as artwork or photographs.

PAINTERLY A painting style that embraces the medium it is created in, rather than trying to hide it.

PORTFOLIO ILLUSTRATION A painted illustration, also known as a portfolio painting, completed specifically for inclusion in a consumer products artwork portfolio.

PRELIMINARY ILLUSTRATION Typically a small-scale illustration completed specifically to establish the color scheme before proceeding to a full-scale production illustration.

PRODUCTION ILLUSTRATION A painted illustration, also known as a production painting, completed as concept artwork for a film.

SKETCH A form of illustration that is often loose in nature.

STORYBOARD An artwork in a sequence of artworks that represents the shots planned for a film.

THUMBNAIL SKETCH A small-scale illustration that explores potential compositions to be expanded into larger concept sketches or production illustrations.

VISTAVISION A cinematography format in which standard 35mm motion picture film is run horizontally rather than vertically, allowing for a larger image area and therefore higher quality.

WEDGES A series of photographs that feature incremental alterations to exposure or color used in visual effects to select ideal values for a final shot.

DETAIL: Detail from production illustration, "Cloud cars over Cloud City with flying beasties," June 22–25, 1978 (see page 309–75)

PEOPLE

J.J. ABRAMS Director of *The Force Awakens*. Abrams is a lifelong *Star Wars* fan and was influenced by McQuarrie's artwork at a young age. He referenced McQuarrie's designs extensively for *The Force Awakens*. Abrams is also known for his work as a writer, producer, and/or director of *Star Trek* (2009) and *Star Trek Into Darkness* (2013), as well as *Mission: Impossible III* (2006), *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol* (2011), and *Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation* (2015).

DAVID ACOMBA Original (uncredited) director of the *Star Wars Holiday Special* and a fellow classmate of George Lucas's at USC. Acomba left the *Holiday Special* before it was completed.

ALLEN ADLER Former vice president of creative services at Galoob Toys. Adler worked with McQuarrie on the packaging artworks he completed for the brand in 1996 and 1997.

KEVIN J. ANDERSON Author of *The Illustrated Star Wars Universe*, *The Mos Eisley Cantina Pop-Up Book*, and *Jabba's Palace Pop-Up Book*, among other titles.

RICK BAKER Second unit makeup artist on *Star Wars*. Baker led the team that created additional Cantina characters for US reshoots.

CRAIG BARRON Matte photography assistant on *The Empire Strikes Back* and matte photographer on *Return of the Jedi*. In addition to being McQuarrie's assistant on those films, Barron lived near McQuarrie in Berkeley and was a personal friend of the artist's for many years.

JOHN BARRY Production designer on *Star Wars* who sadly passed away during the production of *The Empire Strikes Back*. Along with McQuarrie, Barry made a significant contribution to the visual aesthetic of *Star Wars*.

HAL BARWOOD A longtime friend of George Lucas's who worked with McQuarrie in the 1960s and later introduced him to Lucas.

JON BERG Stop-motion animator on *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* and creature consultant on *Return of the Jedi*. Berg worked on Cantina aliens for *Star Wars*, sculpting one from a McQuarrie sketch, and animated Imperial walkers on *Empire*, including one shot utilizing a McQuarrie backdrop painting.

BEN BURTT Sound designer on *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Return of the Jedi*. Burtt also acted as a production assistant on the first film and had the distinction of transporting McQuarrie's original production illustrations to meetings around Los Angeles in the trunk of his car.

ROGER CHRISTIAN Set decorator on *Star Wars* and uncredited second unit director on *Return of the Jedi*. Christian drew inspiration from McQuarrie's production illustrations when creating "lived-in" sets.

JOHN DYKSTRA Special photographic effects supervisor on *Star Wars*. Dykstra reviewed McQuarrie's production illustrations as part of the package of materials Lucas used to explain the film to him.

RICHARD EDLUND Visual effects first cameraman on *Star Wars* and visual effects co-supervisor on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. Edlund photographed several of McQuarrie's matte paintings on the first film.

HARRISON ELLENSHAW Matte artist on *Star Wars* and matte painting supervisor on *The Empire Strikes Back*. Ellenshaw introduced McQuarrie to the art of matte painting.

ALAN DEAN FOSTER Ghostwriter of the *Star Wars* novelization and author of *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*, both of which utilized McQuarrie illustrations as cover artwork.

STEVE GAWLEY Model builder on *Star Wars* and model shop co-supervisor on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. Gawley's orthographic Y-wing line drawing served as the reference point for the ship in McQuarrie's rebel hangar production illustration for *Star Wars*.

VALERIE HOFFMAN Assistant editor of *The Art of Star Wars* and co-writer of *The Art of The Empire Strikes Back*. As a member of the Lucasfilm publishing department working under Carol Wikarska (later Titelman), Hoffman also worked on the Ralph McQuarrie *Portfolios*.

PAUL HUSTON Model builder on *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* as well as assistant visual effects cameraman on *Empire* and chief model maker on *Return of the Jedi*.

JOE JOHNSTON Effects illustrator and designer on *Star Wars* and visual effects art director on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. Johnston made a significant contribution to the design of the ships and vehicles in *Star Wars*. Like McQuarrie, he worked on concepts of almost all elements of *Empire* and *Jedi* and contributed heavily to the overall design of both films.

LAWRENCE KASDAN Co-writer of *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* with George Lucas. Kasdan drew inspiration from McQuarrie's illustrations while writing both films.

HOWARD KAZANJIAN Producer of *Return of the Jedi*. Kazanjian was also present at early meetings with McQuarrie for *Empire* in Lucasfilm's offices on the Universal lot.

IRVIN KERSHNER Director of *The Empire Strikes Back*. Kershner worked closely with McQuarrie on live-action storyboard sequences at Elstree Studios.

GARY KURTZ Producer of *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back*.

GEORGE LUCAS Creator, screenwriter, executive producer, and director of *Star Wars*, as well as co-writer (with Lawrence Kasdan) and executive producer on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*.

JEFF MANN Model maker on *Return of the Jedi* and model shop supervisor on the *Star Wars* Panasonic commercials in the late 1980s, where he worked with McQuarrie on the design of Sparky.

RICHARD MARQUAND Director of *Return of the Jedi*.

CRAIG MILLER Uncredited publicist on *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* and former head of the Official *Star Wars* Fan Club.

DENNIS MUREN Second visual effects cameraman on *Star Wars*, effects director of photography on *The Empire Strikes Back*, and visual effects co-supervisor on *Return of the Jedi*.

CHRISTOPHER NOLAN Prominent writer, producer, and director whose credits include *Batman Begins*, *The Dark Knight*, *The Dark Knight Rises*, *Inception*, and *Interstellar*. Nolan was heavily influenced by *Star Wars* and McQuarrie at a young age.

MICHAEL PANGRAZIO Matte artist on *The Empire Strikes Back* and matte painting supervisor on *Return of the Jedi*. McQuarrie served as a mentor for Pangrazio early in his career.

KEN RALSTON Assistant cameraman on *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* and visual effects co-supervisor on *Return of the Jedi*. Ralston was also visual effects supervisor on *Cocoon*, for which he won an Academy Award alongside McQuarrie.

NORMAN REYNOLDS Art director on *Star Wars* and production designer on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. Reynolds worked with McQuarrie at Elstree Studios for almost a year during the production of *Empire*.

NILO RODIS-JAMERO Assistant visual effects art director on *The Empire Strikes Back* and costume designer on *Return of the Jedi*. Rodis-Jamero was also an uncredited concept illustrator on *Jedi* and submitted designs for nearly all elements of the film, as did McQuarrie and Johnston.

BRUCE SHARMAN Production manager on *Star Wars* and production supervisor on *The Empire Strikes Back*. Sharman was friendly with McQuarrie and socialized with him during his time in the UK on *Empire*.

PETER SUSCHITZKY Director of photography on *The Empire Strikes Back*.

PHIL TIPPETT Stop-motion animator on *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* and creature designer on *Return of the Jedi*. Tippett also submitted concepts on *Empire* for some of the same elements McQuarrie did, such as the tauntaun.

ALAN TOMKINS Art director on *The Empire Strikes Back* who worked with McQuarrie during his time in the Elstree Studios art department.

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David: Thank you to Becky for letting me hang an *Empire Strikes Back* New York City subway poster in our living room. To Madeline and Freddie for loving *Star Wars* as much as I want them to. And to my parents for taking me to the movies in 1977 and buying me a lot of *Star Wars* toys.

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DAVID MANOBL is an Emmy nominated and Writers Guild Award winning writer/director for *Saturday Night Live* (1992–95), *Seinfeld*, where he wrote such episodes as "The Bizarro Jerry," and *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. He was also the co-writer/director of the teen comedy *Burning*, and co-writer of *The Cat in the Hat* and *The Dictator*. He is currently the executive producer of HBO's *Veep*. He is an avid collector of origina comic book art and *Star Wars* memorabilia.

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c. 2004: Ralph McQuarrie (by Ron Magid)

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RALPH McQUARRIE

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